

## **Native American and Pacific Islanders Research Experiences (NAPIRE) Program**

### **Biological Research Program: Summer 2006 in Costa Rica**

**The Organization for Tropical Studies** is pleased to announce a research experiences program open to students from the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation Program (LSAMP, National Science Foundation). As a leader in the field of tropical ecology since 1963, OTS, a consortium of more than 60 domestic and international colleges and universities, has trained some of the world's most renowned tropical ecologists.

The NAPIRE Program is designed to introduce Native American and Pacific Islander undergraduate students to the biodiversity of the tropics. As part of the NAPIRE Program, students will complete a field research project (including experimental design, data-gathering, analysis and presentation of results) in collaboration with fellow students and a research mentor. NAPIRE students will gain experience in applying the scientific method to ecological inquiry and discovery in a collaborative and team-oriented environment. In addition to completing a research project, NAPIRE students will participate in lectures, seminars and field activities that focus on tropical ecology and conservation. Participants will also have the opportunity to learn from indigenous groups of Central America engaged in tropical forest conservation. Each NAPIRE student will be matched with an OTS research mentor, who will provide guidance in the research project and mentoring throughout the Program. Two faculty coordinators, Dr. Mimi E. Lam (University of British Columbia and University of New Mexico) and Dr. Roberto Gonzalez-Plaza (Northwest Indian College), will lead the NAPIRE Program.

Each student selected for the NAPIRE Program will receive:

- round-trip travel expenses between her/his home and Costa Rica
- support for an eight-week research experience at three OTS field stations, starting June 5 and ending July 31, 2006
- support for research supplies
- guidance from an experienced faculty research mentor
- a research stipend

The program will be based at the OTS Las Cruces Biological Station in Costa Rica, a mid-elevation site located on the Panamanian border on Costa Rica's southern Pacific coastal range. Las Cruces provides excellent opportunities for research in diverse areas of tropical biology, including fragmentation biology and restoration ecology. The station encompasses 235 hectares of premontane rain forest, 8 hectares of cultivated collections and 4 hectares of fallow and experimental plots. In addition to Las Cruces, NAPIRE students will visit two other OTS Biological Stations in Costa Rica: La Selva, in the Caribbean lowland rain forest and part of a UNESCO biosphere reserve, and Palo Verde, in the Pacific deciduous dry forest. Visitors to Las Cruces have the opportunity to view many plant species, including bromeliads, palms and orchids, at the Wilson Botanical Garden, as well as a rich diversity of birds, mammals and other important animal groups. The region surrounding Las Cruces has been undergoing conversion to coffee plantations since the mid-1950s, resulting in extensive patches of forest fragments, including a chain of forest remnants, extending from Las Cruces along the Paraguas Ridge to the Guaymi Indian Reservation, 15 kilometers away. Students and researchers based at the Las Cruces Station can take advantage of these ready-made experimental sites for a variety of studies in conservation biology.

Preference will be given to applicants who are Native American and Pacific Islander undergraduates attending LSAMP or All Nations LSAMP (or their partner) institutions. To apply, call the Organization for Tropical Studies at +011 (506) 524-0607 in Costa Rica or (919) 684-5774 in the United States or email Dr. Lam at [m.lam@fisheries.ubc.ca](mailto:m.lam@fisheries.ubc.ca) or Dr. Gonzalez-Plaza at [rgonzalez@nwic.edu](mailto:rgonzalez@nwic.edu).

Information regarding the NAPIRE program, including application materials and guidelines, is posted on the OTS website: [http://www.ots.duke.edu/en/education/reu\\_napire.shtml](http://www.ots.duke.edu/en/education/reu_napire.shtml).

**Applications are due by April 15, 2006.**