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### **12 Universities Selected for National Engineering Program**

(Feb. 13, 2014) — Twelve U.S. universities have been selected to take part in the inaugural cohort of the new Pathways to Innovation program. This program was created by the NSF-funded National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation (Epicenter) to help universities incorporate entrepreneurship and innovation into undergraduate engineering education.

The Pathways to Innovation program will equip the selected universities in their critical role strengthening regional and global competitiveness. According to a recent report<sup>1</sup> published by the U.S. Department of Commerce, the majority of job creation in our country during the last two decades has occurred in young, startup companies. “While the United States remains the global leader in innovation and entrepreneurship, there is constant competition from around the world to maintain that leadership. And as global competition continues to grow, it is critical that the institutions driving innovation improve their ability to develop products and services with market relevance and economic value.”

Individual students will also benefit from the program. “Today’s engineering students need to graduate with more than just technical skills,” said Tom Byers, Director of Epicenter and Professor at Stanford University. “Engineers need the tools and attitudes to help them identify opportunities and bring their ideas to life.”

In the Pathways to Innovation program, teams of faculty and administrators work with Epicenter staff to design and implement a customized plan for each institution. During the two-year process, participants receive access to training, successful models for integrating entrepreneurship into their curriculum, a national network of engineering and entrepreneurship faculty, and membership in a peer network of schools with similar goals.

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<sup>1</sup> “The Innovative and Entrepreneurial University: Higher Education, Innovation & Entrepreneurship in Focus.” U.S. Department of Commerce. October 2013. [http://www.eda.gov/pdf/The\\_Innovative\\_and\\_Entrepreneurial\\_University\\_Report.pdf](http://www.eda.gov/pdf/The_Innovative_and_Entrepreneurial_University_Report.pdf)



The 12 universities selected for the first cohort of the Pathways program serve more than 25,000 undergraduate engineers in the U.S.:

- California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo
- The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art
- Howard University
- Michigan Technological University
- New Mexico State University
- Tennessee Technological University
- Texas A&M University
- University of California, Merced
- University of Massachusetts Lowell
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Leaders from each Pathways team met for the first time at Stanford University on January 16, 2014. A second meeting in Phoenix, AZ, February 26-28, 2014, will bring together teams of four to five faculty and administrators from each school to analyze the needs and opportunities at their schools and develop action plans for transforming the undergraduate engineering experience.

“As the program launches, we're excited to see how each school borrows and adapts from the best models and practices in entrepreneurship and innovation education from around the country,” said Liz Nilsen, manager of the Pathways program for Epicenter, and Senior Program Officer at the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance. “Ultimately, these changes will lead to students graduating with the key skills and experiences to help them solve the really difficult challenges facing our nation and the world.”

Learn more about the Pathways program at [epicenter.stanford.edu/pathways-to-innovation](http://epicenter.stanford.edu/pathways-to-innovation).

### **About Epicenter:**

The National Center for Engineering Pathways to Innovation (Epicenter) is funded by the National Science Foundation and directed by Stanford University and the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance (NCIIA). Epicenter’s mission is to empower U.S. undergraduate engineering students to bring their ideas to life for the benefit of our economy and society. To do this, Epicenter helps students combine their technical skills, their ability to develop innovative technologies that solve important problems, and an entrepreneurial mindset and skillset. Learn more and get involved at [epicenter.stanford.edu](http://epicenter.stanford.edu).