

## **Recruiting and graduating a rapidly diversifying student body at Humboldt State University**

Brandon Schwab, Humboldt State University

The Humboldt State University Geology Department has an opportunity to dramatically increase the diversity of its undergraduate population as campus demographics rapidly change to better reflect that of the state of California. In Fall 2013, HSU became eligible for recognition as a Hispanic Serving Institution. In the same semester, 17% of declared Geology majors self-identified as Hispanic/Latino. This is significantly above the 7% of US bachelor's degrees granted to Hispanic/Latino students in 2010 (GSA Today, v. 24, no 1, doi: 10.1130/GSATG176GW.1). Our challenge is not only to continue to recruit these students to our majors, but to close the achievement gap and increase graduation rates for these students. This is a significant issue for the University and will eventually be tied to system funding models.

The Geosciences Option was established in 2011/12 to provide a solid Earth science background to prepare students for a wide range of geoscience-related careers and intentionally emphasizes major human issues such as natural disasters, Earth resources, and climate change. The Geosciences Capstone provides an opportunity to integrate course work into a project that engages the broader community in some way either through public education or by interfacing with a government agency. This experience involving close interaction with a public agency provides meaningful engagement and communication with a broad constituency.

Recruiting efforts engage students in introductory courses where career opportunities are highlighted. Undergraduate students help in recruiting and community building within the department. Pedagogic reform and hands-on field and laboratory work are meant to achieve inclusive success for all students.