

By Kristin Luciani    Apr 18, 2013

## Graduate Students Recognized for Commitment to Diversity

**UC San Diego only West Coast university with chapter in national Bouchet Graduate Honor Society**

Tiffany Taylor, a fourth year biomedical sciences Ph.D. candidate at UC San Diego, is taking a genetic approach to investigating glioblastomas—the most common and deadliest form of malignant primary brain tumors in adults—with the ultimate goal of developing more effective methods to treat this disease. When not in the lab, Taylor can often be found working with younger students from underrepresented backgrounds to encourage them to pursue higher education. She tutors students for the Homework Helpers program at Mira Mesa Library and participates in recruitment initiatives for increasing diversity at UC San Diego, such as visiting her alma mater, Howard University, to talk with undergraduates about graduate school and expose them to opportunities outside of Historically Black Colleges and Universities. In recognition of her work, Taylor is one of 10 UC San Diego students who have been accepted to the national Bouchet Graduate Honor Society.



Named for the first African-American doctoral recipient in the United States, Edward Alexander Bouchet, the Bouchet Graduate Honor Society seeks to develop a national network of preeminent scholars who exemplify academic excellence and foster environments that support students who have been traditionally underrepresented in academia. The 2013 honorees will be inducted at the Bouchet Conference on Diversity in Graduate Education held at Yale University April 19-20.

“It is a great honor for UC San Diego to be represented in the Bouchet Graduate Honor Society and for our graduate students to be leaders who are advancing diversity and inclusion in higher education,” said Linda Greene, vice chancellor for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

The UC San Diego chapter of the Bouchet Society—the first West Coast chapter of the national organization—was established in 2008 with the first group of graduate honorees inducted in 2009. This year’s members represent a broad range of disciplines, from biology and chemistry to education and art history.

“We are fortunate to have such enthusiastic and talented graduate students at UC San Diego,” said Dean of Graduate Studies Kim Barrett. “And we thank Southwest Airlines for donating the airline tickets that enabled our students to participate in this year’s conference. Cultivating a cohort of young scholars committed to diversifying higher education is an essential investment.”



At UC San Diego, Bouchet Society members collaborate on projects ranging from outreach to local middle and high school students and mentoring undergraduates to hosting educational events on campus. Last year, several members participated in the Puente 9th Grade Student Leadership Conference at UC San Diego, which provides support and guidance for economically disadvantaged and underrepresented students to enroll in four-year colleges and universities. The Bouchet Society representatives conducted workshops on graduate school opportunities, encouraging students to envision how graduate education may be relevant to their futures.

“It’s nice to be part of a group that’s supportive of, and interested in, diversifying the professorship and building up academia to be more diverse,” said Nick Saenz, a doctoral student in the department of history who was inducted into the society in 2012.

At the campus level, the close network created by the Bouchet Society provides an opportunity for students with similar outreach goals to share their individual experiences—what works and what doesn’t—and collaborate on new projects. In addition, the annual national conference at Yale

University offers a chance to meet with faculty, administrators and graduate students from across the country to discuss topics relating to diversity in higher education and academia.

The UC San Diego students' travel to Yale for this year's Bouchet Conference on Diversity in Graduate Education is made possible thanks to donated airline tickets from Southwest Airlines. For more information about supporting diversity initiatives at UC San Diego, visit <http://giving.ucsd.edu/diversity>.

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