STEP Spotlight

Contact: Office of Access & Academic Enrichment (518) 442-5175

STEP Students were winners in STEM Competitions

ALBANY, N.Y. (Spring 2017) - Two local high school students from the Science and Technology Entry Program (STEP) at the University at Albany were top winners in their competitions.

One of the missions of STEP is to generate the interest of students in the STEM and Licensed Professions. STEP serves underrepresented and low income students in grades 7th through 12th. It provides an array of activities and opportunities for students to be aware of possible careers in these fields. STEP encourages and supports their students to move from their comfort zone so they can be better prepared for their college career.

Xavier McCarthy has been a participant in STEP for the past 3 years. As an accomplished chess player, he excels in mathematics. This summer, Xavier proved his mathematical ability when he won first place in a Mathematics Olympiad. The competition was sponsored by Scholastic Motivations, an international group whose mission is to equip and prepare youth to excel academically and develop professionally to successfully make a positive impact within their faith, family and future.

Xavier also participated in our Annual Summer Institute College Overview and Research Experience (CORE) program as a student researcher. He was assigned to University at Albany’s Atmospheric Science Lab, where he studied aspects of how weather forecasts are prepared.

In the Fall, Xavier will be entering 11th grade at LaSalle Institute located in Troy NY. He will continue to seek ways to expand his STEM interests, particularly in Architecture.

Isaiah James has also been a participant of STEP for the past 3 years. In his junior year at Green Tech High School, he was enrolled in his first computer programming course.

Isaiah thought the course was extremely challenging. However, he developed a greater interest through learning about Fibonacci Series, a mathematical problem. He developed an intricate program that ran this series with minimal issue. His research made him curious about how to use computer programming and mathematics on a larger scale. Isaiah collaborated with his teacher and mentor, Mr. Mutford, where they had thoughtful conversations about different areas of mathematics-from number theory to his own theorems. The mentoring directed his advancement to find different mathematical theorems and problems such as the Collatz Conjecture.

Isaiah participated in 2017 STEP Annual Statewide Conference Poster Competition. He placed first in the Senior Technology Division for his research in the Collatz Conjecture. Isaiah plans to do further research in this area and to find ways to prove or disapprove the Beal Conjecture. He will also be attending The University at Albany this fall to study Computer Engineering.

Our students and staff are very proud of the accomplishments of Isaiah James and Xavier McCarthy. Mayra Santiago, Interim Director of UAlbany STEP said: “I am truly excited about the progress of our STEP scholars. They have become role models for our younger STEP students.”

For more information about the STEP program, please contact Mayra E. Santiago, msantiago1@albany.edu or Etwin Bowman, elbowman@albany.edu.