The San Diego State University (SDSU) branch of the Minority Health Disparity International Research Training (MHIRT) program is pleased to announce that it will offer a fantastic research opportunity for students majoring or minoring in the sciences interested in doing ethnobotanical research in Ghana during the upcoming summer!

MHIRT is an international research experience that prepares students for a career in biomedical research. The long-term objective is to increase the number of underrepresented minority faculty in biomedical science.

**ELIGIBILITY** We are looking for students that can fulfill the following requirements by the time the summer program begins:

- Be an American citizen or a permanent resident
- Be at least a rising junior (that means they must have completed their sophomore year by end of June 2008) or more (even graduate students are welcome to apply)
- Be a science major or minor
- Have completed 1 year of general chemistry
- Have completed at least 1 organic chemistry class
- Have completed at least 2 Afrikana, African or African American Studies classes

Students will be using organic chemistry techniques to study some of the plants used to treat diabetes in Ghana. This is why we ask that all the students have taken an organic chemistry class, since everyone comes with different life experiences. We also want to maximize the amount of time students are actually doing research and not learning how to do techniques.

One of the major goals of this MHIRT program, also, is for all the students to have the same/similar experience(s). One way to make sure this happens is to have everyone arrive and leave Ghana at the same time, live in the same house, work cooperatively in the laboratory, go on field trips together and interact with the Ghanaian people.

**WHAT IS COVERED BY MHIRT** plane fair, room and board in Ghana (this money doesn't go directly to the student), $800/month stipend for undergraduates, lab supplies (this goes to the lab and not to the student directly). For other coverage check the website for frequently asked questions by accepted students.

**APPLICATIONS** and other questions you may have are available online at [http://www.sci.sdsu.edu/mirt/](http://www.sci.sdsu.edu/mirt/) and is open to all students in the USA. Applications are due at 4:00 p.m. PST on Friday, February 25, 2011. There are four modifications that students applying for the SDSU MHIRT program should take care to note. Should you have difficulty accessing this website, the following one:


1. If you already have a legitimate passport please note it on your application. Students with passports will be given first priority.

2. Two letters of recommendation instead of one is required. At least one of these letters should be from a faculty member who has supervised you in a laboratory setting.

3. Neither a letter from a potential international mentor nor a proposed research project is required. The type of research SDSU MHIRT summer scholars will be ethnobotanical as stated above.
4. Students should note when their spring semester/quarter ends and when their fall semester/quarter begins. This will help us finalize the dates that the group will leave and return to the United States. We make every effort to avoid putting students in positions of conflict with their classes whenever possible. We can only do this if we know when finals end and the first day of classes begin.

**INTERVIEWS** of potential finalists will begin on February 28, 2011.

**FINAL DECISIONS** will be made and students notified by March 11, 2011.

**TENTATIVE DATE FOR STUDENTS TO ARRIVE IN SAN DIEGO** depend upon when plane reservations to leave San Diego are finalized.

**TENTATIVE DEPARTURE DATES** from San Diego will be between June 3 and June 10, 2011.

**TENTATIVE RETURN DATES** is between August 5 and August 12 to San Diego.

These dates were chosen because many schools are on the semester system (as is SDSU) and traditionally their classes begin in mid to late August. We're hoping this will give students enough time to regroup before classes begin at their parent institutions or give them enough notice so they can make arrangements with their parent institutions about arriving after the semester begins.

After reading the website noted above, if you have more questions feel free to email Dr. Estralita Martin at <esmartin@sciences.sdsu.edu> with a letter of interest or telephone either Mr. Matthew Combs or Dr. Robert Pozos at (619) 594-2581.

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