UC Riverside Engineering Students Receive Research Funding
Fellowships Encourage New Scholars to Work on Engineering Challenges
(June 10, 2008)

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT
Name: Kim Lane
Tel: (951) 827-2645
E-mail: kim.lane@ucr.edu

Dorian Perkins, Lindsay Yee, Christina Zapata

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (www.ucr.edu) -- Several UC Riverside engineering students will have received funding that will fuel their upcoming academic research in the area of engineering.

Dorian Perkins, a first-year computer science student who is pursuing his Ph.D., has been named a fellow of the NASA Harriett G. Jenkins Pre-doctoral Fellowship Program (JPFP). NASA and the United Negro College Fund Special Programs jointly administer the program.

Approximately 20 students per year are selected nationally to receive the three-year fellowship. The fellowship covers tuition/fees and provides a $22,000 stipend. The goal of the program is to increase diversity and employ the best practices for advancing the number of women, minorities and disabled persons who receive graduate degrees in NASA-related science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

Applicants who are accepted for the program travel to a NASA center each summer to receive hands-on training in an area that is closely aligned with their research interest. Perkins, whose proposed project is “Energy-Aware Secure Routing for Mobile Sensor Networks,” will attend a research symposium July 20-25 at the NASA Goddard Space Flight Center in Baltimore, Md.

His faculty advisor is Chinya V. Ravishankar, professor of computer science and engineering.
“I think Dorian is a highly motivated young man, who is truly capable of achieving a great deal. While deeply engaged with the technical aspects of his discipline, he has also been very involved with student organizations and outreach,” said Ravishankar. “We can certainly hope to see him maturing into a strong researcher, as well as into an energetic and effective mentor to his junior colleagues.”

Perkins received his B.S. in computer science from UCR in 2007. He is active in student organizations and as a recruiter for Bourns College of Engineering. His work experience includes jobs at Northrop Grumman Integrated Systems and Southern California Edison. He now serves as graduate advisor to the college’s student chapter of National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE). He was recently hired as a software engineer intern at Google, Inc. in Santa Monica.

Lindsay Yee, a graduating senior who has done worked at CE-CERT’s Atmospheric Pollution Laboratory (APL), has won a highly competitive three-year National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship.

The three-year $121,500 grant will fund her continuing research on secondary organic aerosols (SOA) while she attends the California Institute of technology (Caltech) to pursue her Ph.D. in atmospheric studies.

As an undergraduate student at UCR, Yee worked under the guidance of David Cocker, associate professor of chemical and environmental engineering.

“Lindsay has been a top researcher in our atmospheric processes lab for four years and is quite deserving of this national honor,” said Cocker, adding that he feels a special kinship with Yee because her career to date, closely parallels his — they won many of the same awards — including the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship — and he also chose to go to Caltech for graduate studies.

Yee served as president of the Riverside Student Section of the Society of Women Engineers in 2006-07. She also won a Ford Motor Co. Undergraduate Scholarship and first place in the Jim Guthrie Undergraduate Research Competition in 2007.

Another student, Christina Zapata, was chosen to receive funding from the Environmental Engineering Masters Funding Program, which is sponsored by the Environmental Engineers of the Future (E2F). Through the program, selected students receive up to $20,000 for in-state tuition and living expenses to pursue their Master of Science degrees. Upon graduation, they will work for three years, for one of the sponsoring corporations.

Because the award prohibited her from immediately pursuing her Ph.D., Zapata, who will receive Bachelor of Science degree environmental engineering this week, made the decision instead to attend UC Davis, where she will receive a $28,000 fellowship as a Ph.D. candidate.

For more information about Bourns’ Corporate Partners Program, please contact Linda Parker, Assistant Dean of Development, at (951) 827-6106.