



When Freddy Paige arrived at Clemson as a freshman, he had the goal of becoming an engineer, but learned quickly that taking advantage of help offered on campus was not a sign of weakness. It was a sign of wisdom.

Fortunately for Paige that help came to him in the form of PEER (Programs for Educational Enrichment and Retention), where he found a warm welcome and academic support. During his university career, Paige would take full advantage of the PEER program, serve as a mentor to numerous minority students, develop strong leadership skills, go on to receive his Ph.D. and begin his career in academia.

THE NEED FOR DIVERSITY IN STEM

The shortage of underrepresented students in STEM fields is a problem across the country. Omitting these large populations denies us all of wide-ranging and innovative approaches to today's problems. In turn, it denies these populations of high-paying jobs.

Blacks and Latinos account for 11.5 percent and 13.9 percent of the U.S. population respectively, but only hold 4.6 percent and 5.2 percent, respectively, of science and engineering jobs, according to the 2015 report, "Revisiting the STEM Workforce," from the National Science Board. Meanwhile, women comprise about half of all employed college graduates but represent 28 percent of individuals with college degrees who are working in science and engineering occupations, the board found.

MENTORING, COMMUNITY, COUNSELING AND SUPPORT: IT'S ALL AT CLEMSON.

Clemson is actively supporting the recruitment and retention of these students in the College of Engineering, Computing and Applied Sciences (CECAS) through two award-winning programs:

PEER (Programs for Educational Enrichment and Retention)

WISE (Women in Science and Engineering)

PEER: PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATIONAL ENRICHMENT AND RETENTION

The University's PEER program targets incoming freshmen in engineering and science who are from underrepresented populations, giving them a chance to become familiar with Clemson and how to navigate college while making the connections that will help them succeed.

WISE: WOMEN IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING

For more than a decade, Clemson's award-winning WISE program has been educating and preparing women to pursue and secure successful careers in STEM fields through outreach, mentoring and academic support.

PEER and WISE are committed to enriching the college experience, promoting success, presenting career opportunities and providing students with networking skills – all to instill confidence and prepare students for successful careers post-graduation.

PEER AND WISE CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE.

In the PEER and WISE offices in the newly renovated Freeman Hall students find a home – and a family – that shares their interests. They gather for counseling, tutoring, mentoring, networking with industry leaders, and academic and professional development workshops. Along the way, students develop effective study skills, organizational skills and time-management techniques, and receive insight from current, successful CECAS majors and graduates.

Because interest in STEM fields needs to be nourished early, both PEER and WISE cater to young learners. Project WISE brings girls in grades seven and eight to campus for a one-week summer camp. Students are introduced to career possibilities in science, technology, engineering and math, with current WISE students serving as mentors to the campers.

For incoming Clemson freshmen in STEM disciplines who are from underrepresented backgrounds, the PEER/WISE Experience program is available. Students gain two hours of course credit while learning their way around campus, participating in hands-on research experiences, developing foundational college preparation skills, and making connections with peers through a three-week residential introductory program.

WHY GIVE NOW?

The need for a well-educated, talented and diverse workforce in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math is immediate. Clemson's commitment to increasing diversity is a key component of the University's new strategic plan, ClemsonForward. The recruitment and retention of top students and faculty from all underrepresented groups will help Clemson fuel economic development and create a more diverse workforce.

Great programs such as PEER and WISE need financial support to offer the best possible programs to our students. These funds will provide tutors and learning materials, bring industry leaders to campus, support camps and instruction. With your support, we can ensure that PEER and WISE continue to thrive and make an impact on the development of minority engineers and scientists.

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ClemsonForward will position Clemson for the next 50 years and make an impact on real issues facing the people of our state and nation. Clemson Forever supports the goals of ClemsonForward through its unrelenting mission to strengthen the University by building a solid financial base of private giving, providing exemplary stewardship of those gifts and clearly communicating to donors the impact of their gift and the gratitude of the Clemson Family.

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