

REU Program in Microelectronics-Photonics

Ken Vickers

Research Professor, Physics

Director, Microelectronics-Photonics Grad Program

University of Arkansas

Abstract

The Microelectronics-Photonics (microEP) Graduate Program at the University of Arkansas is an NSF IGERT interdisciplinary graduate program focused on education and research in electronically and photonically active materials, the devices that can be built from these materials, and the high performance systems resulting from combinations of these materials and devices. The microEP program was created in 1998, won its first three year REU site award for summers 2000-03, and has now been funded in a second five year REU site award for summers 2004-08. The microEP REU site has successfully organized the other four NSF REU sites on campus and one internally funded HBCU partnership program into a coordinated effort to maximize the undergraduate programs' impact on total campus graduate recruitment and retention, especially underrepresented group retention. In this paper, the author will describe the methods used to implement the creation of this "broad community of visiting undergraduate researchers" on the Fayetteville campus, as well as the difficulties encountered in merging the different academic cultures that host these summer undergraduate research programs.