

# Evaluation of the Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program and the Educational Partnership Program

Client: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Education

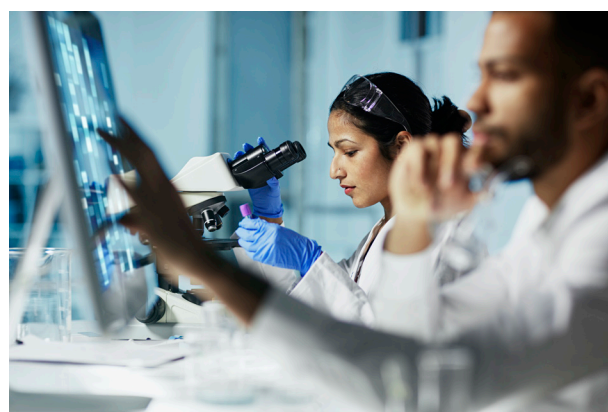
## Overview

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Education operates a \$5M scholarship program that funds direct NOAA involvement through internships and partial tuition payments to students. Two programs support these scholarships: the Ernest F. Hollings Undergraduate Scholarship Program (HUSP) and the Educational Partnership Program (EPP). The overall goal of the programs is to train students, especially those from underrepresented minority communities, in NOAA mission fields. In turn, these programs help prepare students for NOAA-related careers, thus contributing to the growth of such professions.

Insight evaluated the success of these scholarship programs to—

- Increase recipient-college graduation rates.
- Increase the likelihood of students continuing their studies in graduate school.
- Increase employment in NOAA mission-related fields.

For this 3-year contract, Insight collected online data from grant recipients and nonrecipients and conducted site visits to institutions that received NOAA funding for the EPP scholarship program. The information about the HUSP and EPP scholarship programs identified recipients' educational and career outcomes and trajectories. The educational and career outcomes of scholarship participants were compared with those of individuals who applied for but did not receive the HUSP or EPP scholarships in an impact analysis using a regression discontinuity design



(RDD). If the HUSP and EPP scholarship programs successfully meet their goals, more students from underrepresented groups will graduate in NOAA-related and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)-related majors, attend graduate school in these fields, and undertake careers in STEM and NOAA-related fields.

A secondary purpose of the information collection was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the HUSP and EPP scholarship programs. By identifying how and in what ways the programs helped serve student scholars and how they could be improved, NOAA could further refine its programming and target efforts for future investment.

The mixed-methods evaluation incorporated a regression discontinuity design of scholarship recipients and those who applied but did not receive the scholarship, web surveys, in-depth interviews, and site visits to institutions of higher education.

## Products

Final evaluation