Breaking Barriers: Avant-Garde Approaches to Flexible REU Design, Student Recruitment, and REU Implementation to Maximize REU Student Diversity

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Abstract:
Examples of barriers to diverse REU applicant pools and student participation include complex cultural and socioeconomic considerations, reluctance or inability to leave home for extended periods, parental obligations, and a lack of role models in the earth sciences. We present several encounters and discuss potential solutions to remove many of these barriers, which are often compounded and overlapping.

This page outlines different strategies and approaches to overcoming these barriers, such as:

- **Family and cultural obligations**
  - Problem: Students are unable or reluctant to spend 8-10 weeks away from home.
  - Reason: Students may have child care, responsibility for caregivers, or family members.
  - Solution: Create partnerships with family and home institutions.

- **Models and mentorship**
  - Problem: Lack of role models.
  - Solution: Identify and support potential mentors.

- **Logistics**
  - Problem: The application is too challenging.
  - Solution: Simplify application process.

- **RECs**
  - Problem: Budgets are insufficient.
  - Solution: Seek additional funding.

- **Support**
  - Problem: Students may feel isolated.
  - Solution: Foster a sense of community among students.

- **Student preparation**
  - Problem: Students may be underprepared.
  - Solution: Provide preparation workshops.

These strategies aim to create a more inclusive and supportive REU environment, enabling a broader range of students to participate and succeed in earth science research.