



# THE SEES INFORMER

Volume XXI  
2018-2019



## Keep In Touch

It is always great to hear what our alums are up to. Is your contact information up to date? What's new in your life? A new job or promotion? A new credential or degree? A new accomplishment? Your classmates want to know and so does SEES. Please let us know!

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# **\$1 Million National Science Foundation Grant Awarded to Cal Poly Pomona**

Representative Norma J. Torres announced that the National Science Foundation (NSF) has awarded a \$998,205 grant to the SEES program at Cal Poly Pomona to increase the retention, graduation, and career success of high achieving students who are low-income or from under-represented groups and pursuing undergraduate degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

“For too many students in the Inland Empire, the dream of higher education can feel out of reach,” said Torres. “This grant will help deserving young people pursue a high-quality STEM degree at Cal Poly Pomona in a supportive environment, without the worry of financial strain. It’s a critical investment to build up a diverse workforce that can take advantage of the high-skilled, high-demand jobs in our region.”

“Scientists preparing for today’s demanding work environment need both rigorous scientific training and career-specific skills. Additionally, the preparedness that individuals need to tackle psychological and organizational barriers in the workplace are essential to the retention of talent. This is particularly impactful with regard to women and URM students in STEM, who are more likely to leave the STEM fields even after graduation,” said Dr. Steve Alas, Director of Science Educational Enhancement Services in the Biological Sciences Department at Cal Poly Pomona. “The SPIRES program will include workplace psychology training that enables SPIRES participants to circumvent or mediate factors that contribute to workforce attrition.”

The Division of Undergraduate Education grant will fund 125 fellowships over a five-year period to students pursuing bachelor’s degrees in Biological Sciences, Chemistry and Biochemistry, Computer Science, Geological Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics, & Physics and Astronomy. The project has the potential to serve as a pipeline of workforce-ready graduates into the region’s STEM workforce, including biotechnology, computer science, and engineering industries.

Press release by [InlandEmpire.US](http://InlandEmpire.US)



# SEES Director Awarded

## Provost Award for Excellence



The Provost's Awards for Excellence recognize faculty who have earned distinction in the areas of teaching, service, and scholarly and creative activities. They are made possible by a grant from the \$42 million Kellogg Legacy Project Endowment.

Steve Alas, professor in the biological sciences department and the director of the Science Educational Enhancement Services (SEES) has demonstrated exemplary service through support and engagement of underrepresented students. Alas' efforts through SEES, CSU-LSAMP, the NSF BioTIER and STEM Success programs have helped over 2,500 students at Cal Poly Pomona. Major grants from the California Wellness



Foundation, the Hearst

Foundation, the Chancellor's Office, and the National Science Foundation have strengthened student success in STEM fields. In addition, Alas serves the local community through programs like the CPP summer Discovery Camps for K-12 students, who come to campus and are taught by SEES students. To date, more than 600 K-12 students per summer have experienced hands-on learning at the Discovery Camps. Alas provides leadership to the Biological Sciences Department, the College of Science, the Academic Senate, and the Division of Academic Affairs as either a member or chair of multiple committees.



# Mentor Picnic 2018

This year's annual mentor-mentee picnic was a lot of fun! Many students came out to enjoy a fun day in the sun. The kayaks and paddle boats entertained the college kids for hours. The picnic is always a fun way to kick off the school year. The mentors are able to share their valuable knowledge with the freshman and it is a great chance to meet other mentors of different majors. After all the fun on the water, everyone ate a delicious meal from Boston Market. Thank you to the SEES program for organizing such a fun day!





# CPP/CSUF/CSULA Research Dinner



In November 2018, the three CSU campuses all gathered together to enjoy a meal, and to discuss research projects and future career goals. Faculty mentors and research advisors were encouraged to come and

there was a great turnout. Applebee's served a delicious meal, and the directors from all three campuses came and shared a brief word about their individual programs. This event provided a great opportunity to network and build relationships with like-minded individuals.





# SEES Christmas Banquet



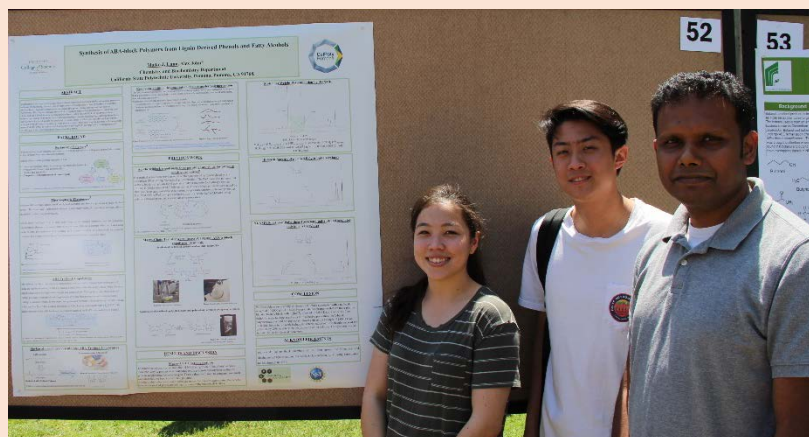
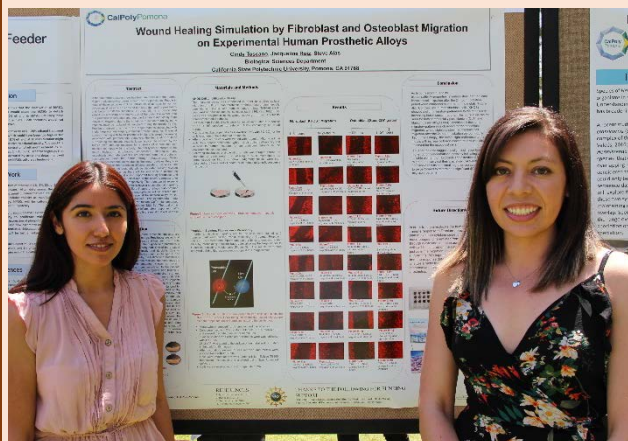
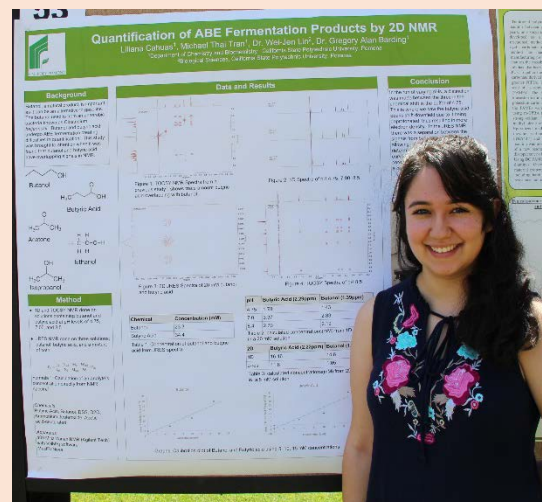
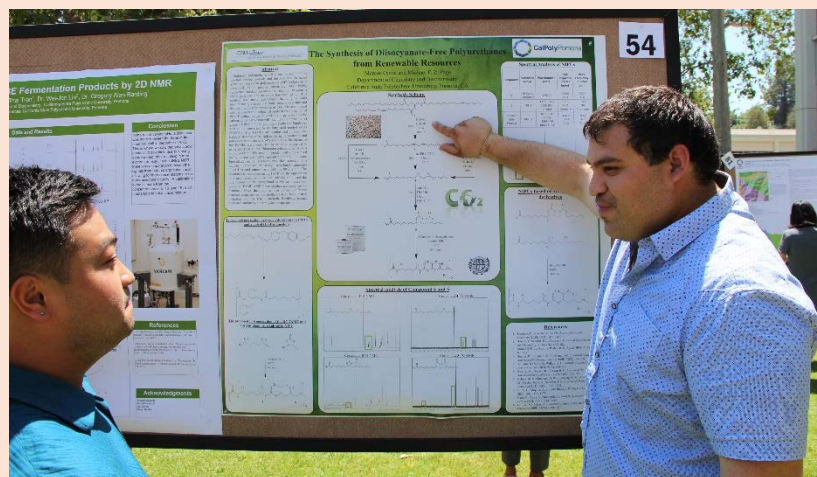
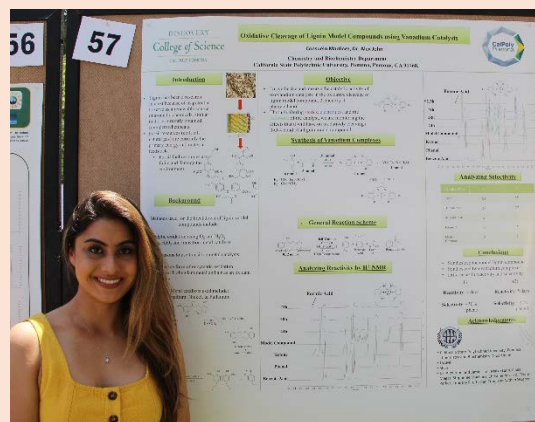
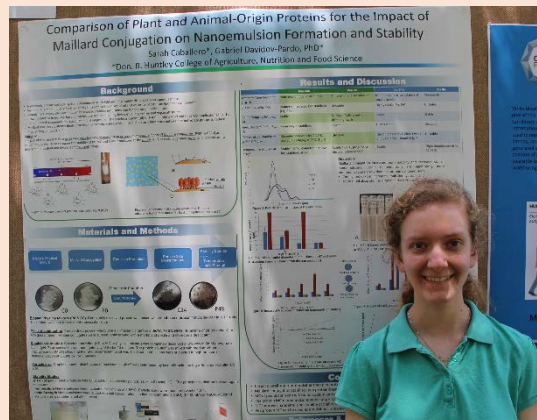
The 31st annual SEES Christmas party was held at the beautiful Kellogg Mansion. Members of the SEES family gathered together to celebrate the holiday season. Students, alumni, and faculty mentors all mingled and enjoyed a delicious meal. The night wrapped up with everyone singing all the classic holiday carols. Jack Hamm has been the pianist at almost every SEES Christmas banquet. We were also honored to be joined again by SEES founder, Dr. Paul Hiemenz.





# College of Science Research Symposium

The college of science research symposium is always an exciting time for students to gather together. Undergraduates from all over the different fields of science come together to show others the research they have done. It is a very proud moment to present what you have spent such a long time working on. The Symposium is a chance to network with other student researchers, as well as with faculty mentors. It is also a great opportunity to see what type of lab you would like to do research for.



# Club Presidents



(L-R) Moises Bravo: Student Members of the American Chemical Society, Jai Lee: Science Council,  
Esteban Escobar: Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics

The SEES program loves to highlight its members that are active students in the Cal Poly Pomona community. As presidents of science related clubs, these students know what it means to be involved. The presidents have the responsibility to lead their clubs/councils and to help get more students involved in the science community. Thank you presidents for all you do!





# Awards Banquet

The annual awards dinner was a night to remember! Four LSAMP Proud Scholars were presented, and due to the number of outstanding applicants, there were two Dr. Paul C. Hiemenz award recipients in addition to the Dr. Barbara Burke Award recipient. This banquet is always a great opportunity to spend time with fellow peers and advisors outside of the classroom.





# Dr. Paul C. Himenz & Dr. Barbara Burke Awardees



## Barbara Burke Award

**Robert Parsons** is earning his Bachelors of Science degree in Computer Science. Recently, Robert qualified for an iOS developer position for a security company in Pasadena. This is the first step in a long path for Robert that will hopefully lead him to one day working at Apple as a software engineer. Over the past four years, Robert has worked as the student assistant for the SEES Program. Every day, Robert has worked in the SEES office helping students check out items from the SEES Loan program, directing students to their academic advisors, and helping with larger projects like creating the semester curriculum sheets for the College of Science. Robert has also helped in many other programs related to SEES, such as the summer STEMpire program for incoming freshmen and the Discovery Camps for small children. Robert developed an iPhone app that will serve as the main resource for all information related to SEES that all SEES students will be able to download Fall 2019.



## Paul C. Himenz Award

**Cindy Toscano** will be graduating this spring 2019 with a Bachelor's in General Biology. She has been a part of the SEES program since her first year at Cal Poly Pomona. She became involved in the SEES program as a mentor and later as a statistics facilitator. She became a LSAMP scholar in 2017 and a McNair scholar in 2018 and currently holds a position as McNair club secretary. She began undergraduate research after her first year at Cal Poly Pomona and is now participating in her second research project. Cindy has presented at several conferences and even obtaining an award in the Southern California Academy of Sciences conference. She plans to continue doing research in the biomedical field and obtain a PhD. Her long-term plan is to work in translational medicine where she can see her research findings being implemented as treatments for patients.



## Paul C. Himenz Award

**Stephenie Martinez** will earn her Bachelor of Science degree in Fall 2019 majoring in General Biology with a minor in Chemistry. She has been placed on both the Dean's and President's Honors list her entire college career. Stephenie has been the president of the Catholic Newman Club for 2 years, been a peer mentor for the Achieve Scholars Program and the Science Education Enhancement Services, the internal affairs officer for the Premedical Student Association club, an Organic Chemistry workshop facilitator, and an Organic Chemistry researcher under Dr. Alex John. Outside of CPP, Stephenie has been a 4<sup>th</sup> grade faith formation teacher at St. Martin's de Porres, has volunteered at Kaiser Permanente, Riverside as a COPE Health Scholar. Stephenie currently holds the position as department coordinator of the cardiology department at Kaiser Permanente. All of these college experiences have inspired her to pursue becoming a physician, and she will apply to medical school in June of 2019.





# LSAMP Proud Scholars

The Louis Strokes Alliance for Minority Participants (LSAMP) is a program that strives to see STEM students thrive in college. LSAMP Scholars are some of the best students in STEM fields. They strive to become the best in their field of study. They are active student researchers and are dedicated to building a better future for themselves. We wish the scholars well as they go on to pursue graduate degrees.



**Denislav Nikolov**

Mechanical Engineering



**Maiko Lunn**

Chemistry



**Khadija Shafiq**

Biotechnology



**Andy Klaib**

Electrical Engineering



# Commencement

Graduation is always a very exciting time. It is full of pride at the accomplishment of a Bachelors degree, and hope for the new things that are ahead. A College education is a stepping stone to a bright future. SEES strives to be an aid to launch students into their future careers with networking and personal development. SEES sashes are awarded to the students that have given back to the program as Discovery camp counselors, student mentors, workshop facilitators, or as orientation leaders. All students are acknowledged for their time dedicated to SEES with the “Barbara Burke Blue” colored sashes named after the former SEES director. Current SEES Director, Dr. Steve Alas, was awarded the Provost Award for Excellence in Service by Sylvia Alva.





## School acceptances

**Paris Amezquita** – accepted to Keck Graduate Institute Pharmacy School

**Rebekah S. Aguilar** – accepted to PhD Biophysics program at Uni of Denver, Physics Department

**Kristen M. Bush** – accepted to MS Program at UC Davis, Energy and Efficiency Institute (Energy Graduate Group)

**Sarah Caballero** – accepted to MS Program at Cal Poly Pomona, Dept. of Nutrition and Food Science

**Liliana Cahuas** – accepted to PhD program at Oregon State University, Dept. of Chemistry

**Justin Lanz T. Cortez** – accepted to credential program at Cal Poly Pomona

**Andrea Gomez** – accepted to MS Program at Cal Poly Pomona, Dept. of Chemistry and Biochemistry

**Danielle McHaskell** – accepted to PhD Program at UC San Diego at Scripps Institution of Oceanography

**Brenda Hernandez** – accepted to MS Program at Cal Poly Pomona, Dept. of Chemistry and Biochemistry

**Gabi Juache** – accepted to PA program at Dominican Uni, Chicago

**Peter M. Kuetzing** – accepted to PhD Program at Uni of Michigan in Engineering

**Leticia Lozano** – accepted to MS Program at Cal Poly Pomona in Mathematics & Statistics Department

**Maiko Lunn** – accepted to PhD Program at the Uni of Michigan, Chemistry Dept.

**Robert Manuel** – accepted to MS Program at Cal Poly Pomona in Biological Sciences Dept.

**Jose Martinez-Camacho** – accepted to PhD Program at Southern Methodist Uni, Dept. of Physics

**Monica Say** – accepted to Master of Business and Science Program at Keck Graduate Institute (Claremont, CA)

**Benjamin Soto** – accepted PhD Program at Johns Hopkins, Cellular, Molecular, Developmental Biology and Biophysics degree program

**Jessika Valenciano** – accepted to PhD Program at the Uni of Notre Dame, Dept. of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences

**Manuel Vejar** – accepted to PhD Program at the Uni of Notre Dame, Dept. of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences

## Summer & Fellowship Programs

**Julia Abrego** – accepted to a summer program at San Francisco State Uni BREED REU Program

**Erick Aguirre** – accepted to NSF CAMPARE (California-Arizona Minority Partnership for Astronomy Research and Education)

**Bashirah Arogundade** – accepted into the Prete Fellowship Program (CPP); Loma Linda Phlebotomy Certificate Program

**Summer Blanco** – accepted into summer internship Ball Horticultural Company in Chicago; accepted into the Prete Fellowship Program (CPP)

**Alejandro Cerano** – accepted to summer internship at GHD (Gutteridge Haskins & Davey) engineering consulting firm

**Kaitlyn S. Coronel** – accepted to summer program at Western Uni

**Taylor N. Edwards** – accepted to Ecosystem Science Internship working with USGS scientists at the NM Landscapes Field Station

**Lindzee Figarola** – accepted to REU in Brisbane, the Uni of Queensland.

**Jennifer D. Gavin** – accepted to REU physics summer program at Lehigh University (PA)

**Veronica Magana** – accepted to summer program at Aquarium of the Pacific (Long Beach, CA)

**Jenny Martinez** – accepted to summer REU at Caltech

**Denise G. Munguia Salazar** – accepted into the National Model United Nations (NMUN)

**Denislav P. Nikolov** – accepted to summer REU at Uni of Michigan

**Giselle Sandoval** – accepted to summer program at Rocky Mountain Biological Lab in CO

**Sofia Pineda** – accepted to STEM Advantage Scholars program

**Khadija Shafiq** – accepted to summer REU at Uni of Michigan

**Viral Shukla** – accepted to summer program at study abroad trip in Spain

**Zijie Zhang** – accepted to the SURE program (summer research program) at Keck Graduate Institute (Claremont, CA)



# SEES Thank-You Excursion

The end-of-year excursion trip is a thank-you from the SEES program to the Mentors, Camp Counselors, Facilitators and STeMpire helpers for all the hard work they do for the program during the school year. This year, everyone took a bus ride from Cal Poly Pomona to the Catalina express. Once the express sailed to Avalon, everyone went snorkeling with the fishes at Casino Point Park. The water was a cool 63 °C, but thankfully there were wetsuits that helped everyone float like a sponge and keep warm. Everyone ate a delicious meal at the Local Cantina, and spent the rest of the day enjoying the sights



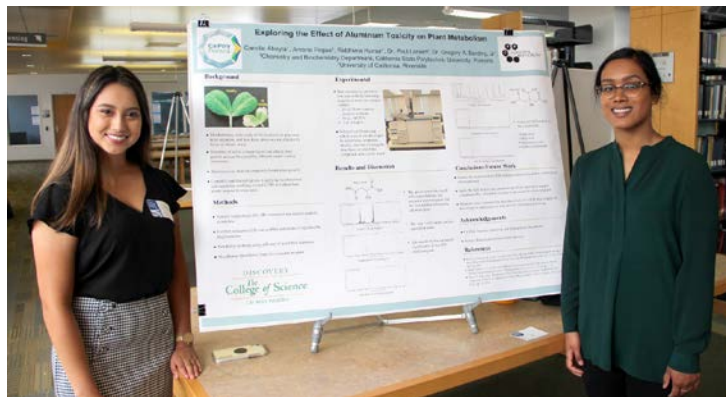
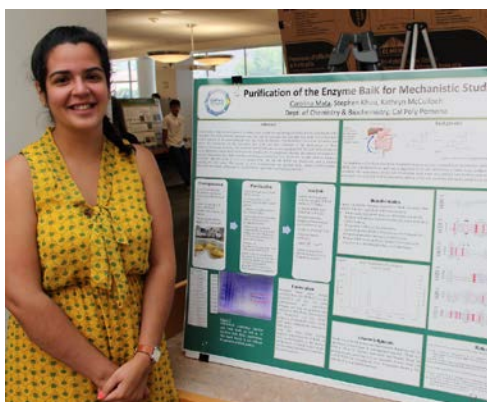




## Summer 2019



Undergraduate and graduate students of many different disciplines gathered together to present the research they completed during the summer at the 5<sup>th</sup> annual CARS symposium. SEES encourages all students to participate in research during their academic career. Research is a great way to apply skills you learn in class, to real world applications. To learn more about getting started with research, go to <https://www.cpp.edu/~our-cpp/index.shtml>

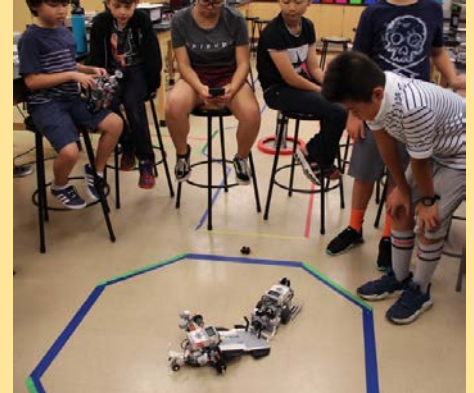




# Discovery Camps 2019



This year, over 700 campers came through the four different camps! Robotics camp, computer camp, science camp, and Discovery camp all have different learning experiences and they are fun for all ages. Robotics campers (Ages 10 and up) learn about programming robots and compete in different activities to see whose robot is superior.



Computer campers (Ages 10 and up) learn about coding and the different types of computer software. Science campers (Ages 6-10) learn about the different fields of science like Chemistry & Biology. Imagination campers (Ages 5-8) do activities that spark their imagination and do crafts that help reinforce science concepts.



For more information about the Discovery Camps Please visit:

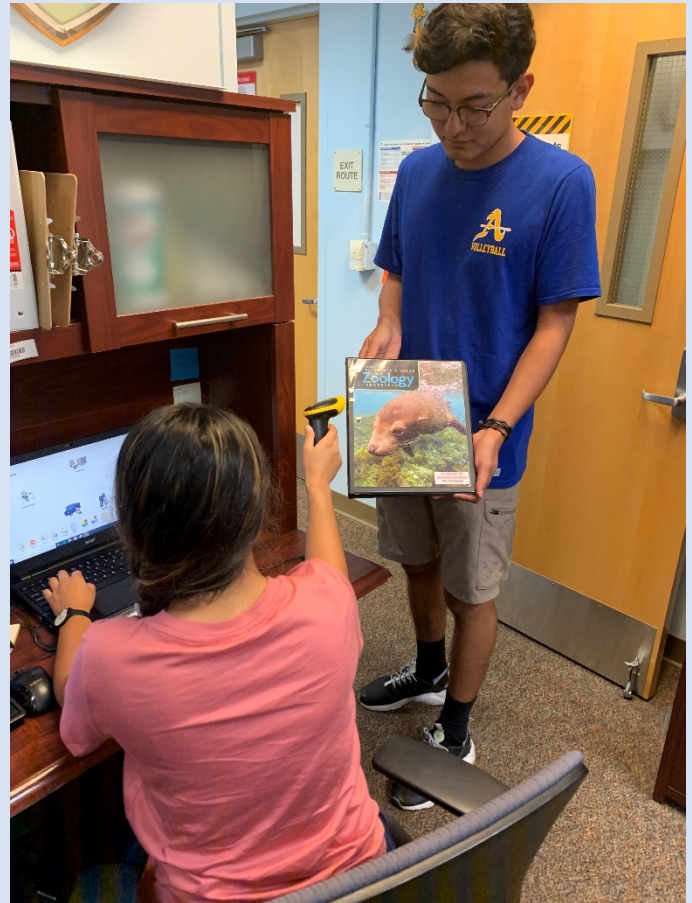
<https://www.cpp.edu/~discovery/>





# New and Improved SEES Loan Program

At the beginning of the 2018–2019 school year, SEES implemented a new computer-based loan system that allowed SEES to offer more items to loan for longer periods of time. Textbooks went from being a two-day loan to a one-week loan, iClickers became available to loan for the entire semester, and laptops were added to the loan program for students who needed computers for extended periods of time. Additionally, gone are the days of students walking into the office and tediously writing on loan cards to check items out. With the new computer-based loan system, checking out items has become a



breeze for both students and office staff.

SEES offers textbooks for numerous science courses, calculators, compasses, dissection kits, iClickers, presenter remotes, lab coats, lab goggles, laptops, microscopes, molecular model kits, projectors, rulers, scissors, and study books for exams such as the GRE for its students to check out.

