

California State University Fresno named Songita Choudhury, an engineering student, as 2011 President Medalist. Choudhury, who represents the Lyles College of Engineering, completed her bachelor's degree in electrical engineering with a 4.0 GPA.

A Smittcamp Honors College Scholar, she has demonstrated excellence in academics, research, leadership and service. In 2008, as a sophomore, she joined a multi-disciplinary bio-mechanics laboratory on campus, and began studying the effects of a neurotoxin known to cause Parkinson's-like symptoms in fruit flies.

The President's Medal winner, one of two that designate the university's top students, is selected from the nine undergraduate Dean's Medalists who represent the academic colleges and schools and the Division of Student Affairs.



Campus Climate and Diversity

Diversity is an integral part of the fabric of California's past, present and future, and therefore an essential element of academic excellence at Fresno State. We are committed to promoting the success of all, and working to address and reduce barriers to success related to differences in areas such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, culture, religion, linguistic diversity, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, geographical region, and more. For example, Fresno State is proud of the majority number of students who are the first in their families to attend college and who continue to make significant contributions in their professions and in their communities.

With this commitment, our faculty, staff and administrators are engaged in initiatives and projects that represent the community of differences that defines our 21st Century world. As the New California's premier engaged University, we focus on broadening students' intellectual horizons, fostering lifelong learning skills, developing the leaders of tomorrow, promoting community in-

volvement, and instilling an appreciation of the world of arts and cultures. In sum, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, faculty and staff and welcome the participation of all.

As president, I am fully committed to the principles of maintaining a learning and working environment that is characterized by integrity, civility, respect for others, and ethical behavior on the part of its faculty, staff, administrators and students. The university must be safe and inclusive, and we do not tolerate any form of harassment, discrimination, or intimidation, as prohibited by university policy and state and federal civil rights laws. Our efforts require an abiding commitment from all members of the University community. It is everyone's responsibility to uphold these principles as a core objective while working and learning at California State University, Fresno.



John D. Welty, President

The California State University reflects California's rich cultural diversity. The varied backgrounds of students, faculty, and staff enrich the university's intellectual life and create its unique community.

While the university views diversity as a great source of its strength, some people on campus, as elsewhere in society, feel threatened by those who are different and act in disregard of the personal dignity and rights of others. Discrimination and harassment have no place in a university community. They limit the educational aspirations of students, interfere with the performance of faculty and staff, and damage the environment of tolerance and mutual regard that must prevail for a university to fulfill its mission.

The university is therefore committed to maintaining an environment free from discrimination and harassment. To fulfill this commitment, the university will work to prevent discrimination from occurring and will ensure that federal and state laws as well as university regulations prohibiting discrimination are fully enforced.

Demeaning and gratuitously offensive conduct sometimes takes expressive forms that, although repugnant, cannot be prohibited or punished. Both the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and Article I, Section 2 of the California Constitution restrict the university's power to limit free speech. To do so, even in the case of speech that is offensive and demeaning, would undermine basic principles of discourse fundamental to any university.

As an educational institution, the university will use its intellectual and persuasive powers to discourage offensive and harassing speech from occurring and to encourage civil exchange. The university will attempt to teach its students and employees to listen as well as to speak, and to do both with an open mind. This is consistent with the university's mission to foster dialogue that educates students and prepares them for effective citizenship. The mission requires respect for differing viewpoints, but does not give license for demeaning language and harassing behavior that stifle free exchange of ideas and compromise the university's educational goals.

Respect throughout the university for the dignity and rights of others, including the right to be free from discrimination and harassment and the right to speak freely, is essential to creating and maintaining an environment conducive to learning.

— From *Campus Climate: Toward Appreciating Diversity*, a report prepared for the CSU, 1990.