

Monica Mendez Receives 2003 Karen Wetterhahn Memorial Award

The Superfund Basic Research Program (SBRP) is pleased to announce that Monica Mendez is the recipient of the sixth annual Karen Wetterhahn Memorial Award. The award was presented to Mendez on 11 November 2003 at the SBRP Annual Meeting at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire.

Each year the SBRP presents this award to an outstanding scholar to pay tribute to the life and scientific accomplishments of Karen E. Wetterhahn, former director of the SBRP at Dartmouth College. Wetterhahn died 8 July 1997 as the result of an accidental exposure to dimethylmercury. She was an established authority on the effects of heavy metals on biological systems, as well as a dedicated teacher and mentor. The SBRP honors Wetterhahn's legacy through the annual recognition of an outstanding student who studies metals and best demonstrates the qualities of scientific excellence exhibited by Wetterhahn.

Mendez is in the second year of her Ph.D. training in the Soil, Water, and Environmental Science program at The University of Arizona, where she is engaged in interdisciplinary studies in plant physiology and microbiology. She earned the award based on her research excellence in her investigations of the microbial–plant interactions that accompany successful establishment of vegetation in harsh environments. She also is being honored for her strong commitment to solving ecological and environmental problems, particularly those that impact Spanish-speaking communities along the U.S.–Mexico border. Her investigations of the use of revegetation with native plants to stabilize the metals in mine tailings could lead to a low-cost and low-maintenance remediation strategy applicable to the hundreds of thousands of abandoned mine sites in the arid southwestern United States and Mexico border region.

The NIEHS congratulates Mendez on her research accomplishments and wishes her continued success in her scientific career.



Monica Mendez