

## Engaging Future Leaders in Collaboration-Based Siting: Student Participation in the ANS Nuclear Siting Consortium's "Consolidated Storage for Spent Nuclear Fuel" Project

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### Abstract:

The American Nuclear Society-led Nuclear Siting Consortium, recipient of a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) award for the project "*Asset-Based Collaboration for Effective Engagement in Consolidated Storage Siting*," is advancing a nationwide, replicable model for community engagement in collaboration-based siting of consolidated storage facilities for used nuclear fuel. This two-year initiative brings together four partner universities—The City College of New York (CCNY), South Carolina State University, the University of New Mexico, and Northern Arizona University—to co-create sustainable dialogue between technical experts, community organizations, policymakers, and the public.

A distinctive feature of the CCNY participant is the active participation of high school, undergraduate, and graduate students, who contribute to the design and implementation of engagement strategies through research, outreach, and collaboration with local communities. The CCNY team has played a key role in developing connections with diverse urban communities, encouraging students to explore careers and research opportunities in nuclear energy and the safe storage of spent fuel. CCNY students have also been involved in studying the multifaceted aspects of nuclear energy—including community, social, health, and safe transportation considerations—while supporting transparent and inclusive dialogue around nuclear waste management.

Through experiential learning and interdisciplinary collaboration, student participants gain valuable insight into the technical and societal dimensions of nuclear energy, while

advancing the Consortium's mission of building effective, enduring partnerships among academia, government, and communities. The presentation will highlight student-led contributions, CCNY's community engagement efforts, and lessons learned in fostering transparent, informed, and trust-based approaches to the siting and management of spent nuclear fuel.