

A member of the Appropriations Committee, Rep. Farr has supported funding for the National Science Foundation and their efforts to support our oceans

Washington, DC – Congressman Sam Farr (D-CA) today announced that the Marine Advanced Technology Education (MATE) Center has been awarded \$1,595,102 from the National Science Foundation—to continue to offer technology-rich education aimed at increasing the number of students who enter ocean-related occupations. Located at Monterey Peninsula College, the MATE Center is a national partnership of community colleges, high schools, universities, professional societies and research institutions.

“This grant is a reflection of the important role the Monterey MATE Center is playing in meeting the needs of ocean employers” said Congressman Sam Farr. “Our oceans are one of our greatest natural resources, and with the support of the National Science Foundation, MATE is preparing a technical workforce that is dedicated to working responsibly in our oceans.”

The MATE Center is educating and preparing a workforce committed to understanding and safeguarding our oceans. Through the development of marine technology textbooks and other curricula, professional development workshops for teachers, underwater robotics competitions, industry-education partnerships and at-sea internships, the MATE Center is preparing students to support the workforce needs of the ocean economy.

“The Monterey Bay region is rich in marine research and technology and has many assets that make it perfectly suited for a national center in marine technology education,” said Deidre Sullivan, Director of the MATE Center. “This Center is playing a critical role in researching and characterizing trends in the ocean workforce, identifying the knowledge and skills this workforce needs, placing this information in the hands of educational institutions, and working to ensure that educational programs are appropriately preparing students to meet workforce needs. Thanks to Sam Farr’s leadership, the Monterey region is a leader in progressive ocean conservation legislation.”

The MATE Center coordinates annual underwater robotics competitions for middle school, high school and college students. The students work in teams to learn then apply skills in science, technology, engineering and math to create a robot that can accomplish tasks based on scenarios from the workplace. Locally, nearly 300 students participate in the Monterey Bay Regional Competition each year. The Monterey competition is one of 20 regional MATE competitions that take place around the world and involve thousands of students, teachers, and industry professionals. The winning teams advance to MATE’s international competition, which is taking place this year at NASA Johnson Space Center’s Neutral Buoyancy Lab in Houston, Texas in June.

One of the major tasks of the MATE Center is to create Knowledge and Skill Guidelines (KSGs) for marine occupations. These KSGs identify and define marine technical occupations and the abilities that men and women need in order to perform well in these occupations. MATE has created KSGs for critical jobs such as marine technicians, remotely operated vehicle technicians, hydrographic survey technicians, oceanographic instrumentation technicians, and operational marine forecasters.

As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Mr. Farr has supported funding for the National Science Foundation and the work they do to support marine education and

conservation.

##