

# Undergrads star in FaST times at DOE laboratory

Based on work they did last summer at Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, two University of Arizona students have been invited to present a paper at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The AAAS will hold its annual meeting — the largest general science conference in America — in Denver Feb.13-18.

The students, along with four UA faculty members, were participants in the Faculty and Student Teams (FaST) program sponsored by the Department of Energy and the National Science Foundation. The program allows faculty members and PNNL engineers to work together to pursue research projects, while at the same time providing gifted undergraduates a chance to participate in real-life research that could yield an important product.

The paper, "Development of Polymeric Waste Forms for the Encapsulation of Toxic Wastes Using an Emulsion-based Process," will be presented during a poster session. It was also selected by DOE for publication in Volume 3 of its Web-based periodical, "Journal of Undergraduate Research."

The students, Rachel Evans and Anh Quach, teamed with four UA faculty members to develop environmentally friendly ways to isolate toxic waste. The process could eventually produce a lower-cost, more environmentally benign approach to toxic-waste disposal. The project is part of the UA engineering department's continuing effort to build a long-term working relationship with PNNL.

PNNL senior research scientists Harry Smith and staff scientist Gary Smith, a UA alumnus, provided project support. Managers Rod Quinn and Loni Peurrung secured the financial resources that the FaST team needed to be successful.

The UA faculty members are working to secure another FaST program grant for next summer and plan to continue developing other collaborative projects with PNNL. ■



University of Arizona students Rachel Evans (right) and Anh Quach discuss the results of their research with Ray Orbach, director of DOE's Office of Science, during a visit to Pacific Northwest National Laboratory last summer. The two will present the results of their research to the upcoming meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Also pictured are two of their faculty advisors, professor Dunbar Birnie (left) and associate professor Brian Zelinski.