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**Alpha Chi**  
National College Honor Society

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# PRESS RELEASE

## **Fresno Pacific University's Alpha Chi Chapter Wins 2023 Collaborative Research Competition**

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Alpha Chi National College Honor Society proudly announces that the California Zeta chapter from Fresno Pacific University has won the 2023 Trisha M. Yarbrough Collaborative Research Competition for their exceptional project entitled, "Language, Perception, and Climate Change: The Unique Understandings of Spanish-Speaking College Students." With first place, the team is awarded a grand prize of \$5,000.

As a multidisciplinary honor society, Alpha Chi fosters collaboration among student members from various academic fields, and this annual competition is one way the society actively promotes interdisciplinary undergraduate research. Named in honor of Dr. Trisha Yarbrough, Alpha Chi's third executive director and the driving force behind the competition, the Collaborative Research Competition encourages students to focus on finding solutions for real-world issues, thus exemplifying the society's long-standing commitment to making "scholarship effective for good."

This year's national competition carried the theme, "Action for Our Atmosphere" and was judged by a multidisciplinary panel of professors who assessed seven collegiate teams submitting a written research paper, a formal poster for public display, and a live national convention presentation that included a question and answer period involving both judges and audience members.

FPU's interdisciplinary student team was comprised of Luke Smith, a senior studying software engineering and philology, Magdalena R. Wenger, a senior biology and intercultural and religious studies major, and Paola Guadalupe Gonzalez Mendez, a junior studying applied math and environmental studies. Their research focused on Mexican American, Spanish-speaking college students to assess how their spoken language, cultural background, and the current terminology and framing of climate issues affected their perception of climate change and the consensus-building that needs to occur to encourage action on the issue.

In reflecting on their presentation, Alpha Chi Executive Director Lara Noah appreciated a quote from their report's conclusion, "We cannot work toward a common understanding of climate

change without an understanding of what people already believe and the factors which contribute to their ideas.”

Any active Alpha Chi chapter may form a multidisciplinary team to conduct research around a common goal for the competition. Teams intending to participate in the 2024 competition will be required to declare their intentions to compete no later than October 31, 2023. The theme for next year’s competition will be released this summer.

Alpha Chi National College Honor Society invites membership to juniors, seniors, and graduate students from all disciplines in the top ten percent of their classes at its member institutions. Chartered on more than 300 campuses nationwide, chapters induct approximately 10,000 students annually. Since the Society's founding in 1922, Alpha Chi members, charged with upholding the tenets of Truth and Character, have dedicated themselves to “making scholarship effective for good.” Alpha Chi is a certified member in good standing of the Association of College Honor Societies.

For more information on Alpha Chi National College Honor Society and the Collaborative Research Competition, please visit [www.alphachihonor.org/collaborative-research-competition](http://www.alphachihonor.org/collaborative-research-competition).

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