The Space Weather Weekend: A new CISM Diversity Initiative

CISM Diversity: Goals and Objectives
- To involve historically underrepresented minorities and women in space weather research
- Increase number of underrepresented space weather professionals
- Focus both on recruitment and retention
- The Space Weather Weekend is a means to meet our goals and objectives

Space Weather Weekend: Our Objectives
- Use the excitement of space weather to recruit students from Minority-Serving Institutions to apply to CISM graduate schools - just a few students will significantly impact demographics of field
- Expose participants to a new field of science in an innovative teaching environment
- Establish personal connection with participants

Recruitment Strategy
- The recruitment was done in a very short time - We started recruiting on 3/21 for the 4/22 event
- We used existing networks in the African-American and Hispanic Physics Communities, along with the NASA/MUCERPI network
- Faculty at minority-serving institutions were contacted directly and asked to recruit students
- Students had a financial incentive - $300 stipend plus expenses
- A brochure was produced to aid recruitment
- 11 students participated, from AAMU, Fisk U., Grambling State U., Howard U., NC A&T State U., U. of Houston (Downtown), and UT Brownsville
- A professor from NC A&T, Abebe Kebede, also attended

Who did what?
- AAMU hosted the event, handled local logistics, stipend, and travel, and arranged visit to Rocket Center
- FTech designed the program, recruited students, and produced the CISM_DX Live CD
- Scientists and staff from AAMU, Boston U., FTech, and Marshall Space Flight Center made presentations and ran the labs
- CISM staff at NCAR and AFRL contributed material

Schedule
- Held April 23-24 at AAMU
- Loosely based on the CISM Summer School
- Saturday - Lectures (w/ peer instruction) on Sun, Magnetosphere, Ionsphere, CISM, and space weather: Visit to Huntsville Space and Rocket Center; Special session on applying to graduate school
- Sunday - Working with CISM_DX and tracing a space weather event from Sun to Earth
- All meals eaten together, including Saturday night dinner at the Olive Garden, to build sense of community

Evaluation and Outcomes
- Formatative evaluation shows 4 or greater on 1-5 Likert scale for useful/valuable
- Student comments indicate positive impact on choice of space physics as a career - 6 indicated new interest in applying to CISM grad school
- Space science is now among my top 3 options for graduate school. It is much more interesting than I initially thought it would be. Now I will definitely consider this field for graduate school.
- "Very likely that I will apply for graduate study in space physics since this workshop.", and "...This program was the single factor influencing my decision. Before this workshop I was completely unaware of this field, but now I see it as a possible research career.

CISM_DX Live CD
- This new CISM product was developed specifically for the Space Weather Weekend, but it has much broader utility
- Based on KNOOPPIX Linux distro in bootable CD format plus stripped-down version of standard CISM_DX installation
- Non-essential packages and datafiles were removed, libraries needed for CISM_DX added, and a light-weight Xwindow manager (IceWM) is used
- CD contains data and DX networks for exploring MAS, ENLIL, LFM, TING
- All students got a copy

Summary
- The first CISM Space Weather Weekend was organized and conducted in Spring 2005
- Initial evaluation indicates that it was a great success
- A new resource, the CISM_DX Live CD was produced
- Participants who apply to CISM graduate schools will have personal contacts to help them
- A new connection with NC A&T program was established
- Further evaluation will determine long-term impact