Ohio State University and Partner Institutions receive $3.5 Million Grant to Increase Underrepresented Graduates in STEM fields

National Science Foundation grant will establish an alliance to assist underrepresented students toward degree completion

The Ohio State University and 10 additional Ohio colleges and universities will share over the next five years a $3.5 million National Science Foundation grant to help increase underrepresented student success in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines. The grant, awarded through the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (LSAMP) Program, establishes an alliance that will work to double the number of bachelor’s degrees completed in STEM fields at partner institutions within five years.

Ohio State will serve as the lead institution of the alliance, according to Dr. Barbara Fink, associate professor in the College of Optometry and the director of the Ohio-based program.

“We will foster a partnership among alliance institutions and industry and community partners that will result in programming that is collaborative, effective, and sustainable and will impact students well beyond the duration of grant funding,” Fink said. “Additionally, our efforts will incorporate evidence-based strategies for successful recruitment, retention, persistence, and degree completion.”

Alliance-wide activities will include innovative curricular reforms in mathematics, an interactive website, shared online courses and workshops, diversity sensitivity training and a research conference. Each institution will provide advisement and counseling, residential summer bridge programs, paid undergraduate research opportunities, and mentoring, tutoring and supplemental instruction.

The Ohio alliance includes seven four-year institutions: Central State University, the University of Cincinnati, Cleveland State University, Miami University, The Ohio State University, Wilberforce University and Wright State University. Community college institutions include: Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, Columbus State Community College, Cuyahoga Community College and Sinclair Community College. The alliance will also collaborate with community partners, an industry advisory board and other programs supported by the National Science Foundation.

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion at Ohio State, where Fink is a Faculty Fellow, will oversee the implementation of the grant.

“Diversifying the STEM workforce is one of the country’s major challenges,” said Valerie B. Lee, vice provost for Diversity and Inclusion, Chief Diversity Officer and vice president for the Office of Outreach and Engagement. “This grant will provide comprehensive, integrative and sustainable strategies for strengthening the nation’s STEM talent pool. We look forward to working with our alliance institutions to ensure that the state of Ohio is amply represented in a program named after one of its own statesmen.”

The alliance will convene on November 21, 2013 on Ohio State’s campus to begin work on its overall strategy.

For questions about the Ohio LSAMP Alliance, contact Fink at fink.4@osu.edu or (614) 688-2998.