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In Obama Letter, UNH President Commits To Training More Math And Science Teachers

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DURHAM, N.H. – University of New Hampshire President Mark W. Huddleston was one of 79 public university presidents and chancellors nationwide to sign a letter to President Obama committing collectively to prepare 10,000 science and math teachers annually by 2015. The White House announced the initiative yesterday as part of Obama’s Educate to Innovate campaign to lift American students’ science and math achievement over the next decade.

"I am proud that UNH has joined other major public universities in supporting President Obama’s efforts to ensure that the United States has one of the world’s most scientifically and mathematically capable workforces. This is a critical national objective. It is also one that UNH, a land-grant university recognized by the Carnegie Foundation for its engagement with the community, is well-positioned to help accomplish, for we take very seriously our mission to bring our considerable intellectual resources to bear on the most pressing challenges facing our state, nation and world," Huddleston said.

“To educate our students to compete effectively in the global economy, we need to prepare the world’s best science and mathematics teachers. As the institutions with, by far, the largest cohorts of the most capable undergraduate science, mathematics and engineering students, public research universities have a critical role to play in preparing the number and quality of teachers the nation requires,” says the letter to Obama, which can be read in its entirety here: https://www.aplu.org/NetCommunity/Document.Doc?id=2051.

UNH has a strong history of commitment to science and mathematics teacher preparation at both the pre-service and in-service levels. The UNH teacher certification program combines strong undergraduate content preparation with graduate courses in education and prepares teacher candidates to be leaders in their fields. Drawing on the leadership of UNH’s Joan and James Leitzel Center -- dedicated to transforming science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education at UNH, in elementary and secondary schools, and informal settings -- and the UNH department of education, the UNH effort will involve working with state agencies to assess state needs, recruitment in the areas of science and mathematics, working to secure external funding, and building partnerships with other institutions.

Last February, UNH was chosen to participate in the APLU’s Science and Mathematics Teacher Imperative (SMTI) project, the largest collaborative focused on science and mathematics teacher preparation in the country. In 2008, UNH was one of 119 higher education institutions recognized as a community engaged university by the Carnegie Foundation. In 2009, UNH received a $1.3 million ADVANCE grant from the National Science Foundation to support women faculty in the STEM disciplines.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea, and space-grant university, UNH is the state’s flagship public institution, enrolling 12,200 undergraduate and 2,200 graduate students.