

## Media Relations

# UNH Receives \$1M+ To Prepare Math, Science Teachers For High-Need Schools

September 9, 2010

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DURHAM, N.H. – A \$1,197,811 grant from the National Science Foundation will help the University of New Hampshire prepare science and mathematics teachers for work in high-need school districts. The five-year grant, from the NSF's Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program, supports the preparation of new teachers -- undergraduates and working professionals -- in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) disciplines. Scholarships and stipends, amounting to 80 percent of the grant, will be awarded to undergraduates and graduates who commit to teaching in high-need school districts, including those in rural areas and those that serve poorer students and families.

"We're trying to convince some of our brightest math and science students to go into teaching, because we need more great math and science teachers out there," says Sharon McCrone, associate professor of mathematics at UNH and the principal investigator on the grant. The UNH team includes lecturer of mathematics Neil Portnoy, who will serve as project director; Tim Fukawa-Connelly, assistant professor of mathematics; Sarah Stitzlein, assistant professor of education; and Dawn Meredith, associate professor of physics.

The Noyce Scholarship Program at UNH will provide 28 full scholarships over five years to juniors and seniors, as well as to professionals working in the STEM fields looking to change careers to teaching science and mathematics. Scholarship recipients must commit to working in high-need schools upon completing their degrees.






A unique feature of the Noyce Scholarship Program at UNH will be its focus on the special challenges of teaching in rural school districts. Noyce Scholars will have access to workshops and mentoring targeted to those challenges in addition to the preparation received in UNH's acclaimed five-year teacher preparation program.

"Teachers in rural districts tend to feel really isolated," says McCrone. To better prepare teachers for the rural environment, year-long internships will be in rural schools in New Hampshire and Maine, tapping existing networks established by UNH's involvement in the TRIO programs (such as Upward Bound and Educational Talent Search) for first-generation college students.

The program will expand on UNH's five-year teacher preparation program, which culminates in a master's degree, by offering opportunities for undergraduates to tutor and mentor at-risk middle school and high school students through summer internships. In addition, a series of seminars will focus on rural educational issues such as professional isolation, addressing the needs of at-risk students, and scarcity of funding to better prepare future teachers and help to increase retention rates of new STEM educators in rural districts.

The Noyce Scholarship Program is currently accepting applications. To apply, or to learn more about the program, contact Sharon McCrone at [smy72@unh.edu](mailto:smy72@unh.edu).

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.

 
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