U.S. Department of Education Announces $5.4 Million Grant to Fund Lehman's Innovative Teacher Prep Program

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BRONX, NY—The Lehman College School of Education recently received a U.S. Department of Education (DOE) grant of $697,486, with a projected total award of $5.4 million over the next five years based on performance, to fund a unique teacher preparation program in STEM education.

The grant is part of the Department of Education's Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Program, which is providing over $20 million in new funding to support teacher preparation models that prepare new teachers to serve students in under-resourced schools, located in neighborhoods where at least a third of residents live below the poverty line.

A Department of Education announcement noted a critical need to support teachers' professional growth in exciting and challenging ways, especially in STEM and computer science—fields that rarely offer professional development opportunities for K-12 teachers.

"This innovative program, called LUTE-STEM (Lehman Urban Transformative Education-STEM) aims to prepare effective K-12 teachers from a diverse student population who will develop proficiency in teaching STEM, and computer science in particular, to students in Bronx and New York City high need schools," said Gaoyin Qian, Interim Dean of Lehman's School of Education. "Teacher candidates will receive strong support so that they can benefit from a yearlong clinically rich experience, which will enhance their teaching effectiveness."

A total of 31 awards were made to a pool of recipients that included more than two dozen school districts, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations. Lehman College was the only CUNY institution to receive a TQP grant. The announcement lauded the awardees' innovative ideas, and called attention to Lehman's plan, which will enable teachers to earn micro-credentials.

LUTE-STEM, which will admit students in 2020, will be an intensive, 18-month master's program in one of four areas: early childhood education, childhood education, mathematics, or science. Along with required graduate coursework, teacher candidates will participate in professional development workshops, a mentorship program, and an extended yearlong classroom residency in a New York City public school.

LUTE-STEM will prepare teacher candidates to qualify for a New York State teaching certificate upon completion of the program, and earn a computer science micro-credential at Lehman College.

As many of the teacher candidates are expected to come from low-income households, most of the grant funding will be allocated for stipends. The support will enable students to participate fully in the classroom residency, which would be difficult or impossible to manage along with outside employment.

At the end of five years, Lehman expects to have produced 100 teachers with specialized expertise in STEM disciplines. In addition, they will be able to incorporate computer science principles and practices into their classrooms, schools, and after-school programs. Because of a teacher shortage in the Bronx, it is expected that all graduates will find employment, with 70% working in underserved New York City public schools for three years or more after program completion.

Professor Harriet Fayne, who is overseeing the project, says she looks forward to working with her colleagues in the School of Education on developing LUTE-STEM, "as we determine how to build an exemplary urban teacher residency program that can serve as a national model."

Designed to foster a deep relationship between Lehman College and high-need schools, LUTE-STEM will demonstrate how higher education and public schools together can move the needle on student achievement.

This is the second TQP grant that Lehman College has received. The project runs from October 2019 through 2023.

For more information about Lehman College, visit:

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