

RISE NOYCE Outcome Report

Recruiting Impassioned STEM Educators (RISE) project (award # 1540792 from September 1, 2015 to August 31, 2016 for \$124,999) was a capacity building grant to develop a multidimensional program for recruiting and retaining highly-qualified middle and secondary Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) teachers in the Northwest Florida region.

INTELLECTUAL MERIT: Educational partners included University of West Florida, Pensacola State College, Northwest Florida State College, STEM Master Teachers, STEM learning centers, and three area school districts who worked together to conduct a needs assessment of the training mentors, and develop a recruitment initiative to attract highly qualified STEM majors to become secondary school teachers. Results were disseminated to the RISE advisory board and partner meeting, as well as at the 2016 SE Regional Noyce Conference and 2016 Noyce Summit.

BROADER IMPACTS: In the project, a grades 6-12 STEM professional teacher certification pathway (UWF-Teach) was developed as was a new recruitment course titled *Exploring Inquiry Teaching*, which targets dual enrolled students and math and science majors. In addition, printed materials, presentations, surveys and social media sites were created that will be used in the UWF-Teach NSP project. Teacher candidates in the new pathway will impact students in grades 6-12, including those from *high-needs* schools that serve both urban and rural low-economic students, by working with students in local school districts. Ninety eight percent (98%) of principals that took part in the needs assessment were extremely or somewhat interested in partnering with University of West Florida, Pensacola State College, and Northwest Florida State College in order to identify teachers to participate in professional development and in providing placements for field experiences. Sixteen experienced local educators took part in professional development offered by the program and reported 25% gains in their ability to mentor new teachers. These educators were not new to the profession with half the participants having 10 or more years of teaching experience. This enhanced mentoring will potentially facilitate retention, persistence, and effectiveness of new teachers in the region, including those teaching in *high-needs* schools, and their students. The *RISE* recruitment course, *Exploring Inquiry Teaching*, will serve as a model course for other undergraduate colleges. In addition, the *RISE* project strengthened and forged new and important partnerships in the following ways:

- 1) Formalized cooperative activities in the STEM disciplines and teacher education departments
- 2) Connected higher education institutions with local schools and teachers
- 3) Expanded the STEM learning community in Northwest Florida