

National Science Foundation Grant Awarded to Suffolk to Increase STEM Degrees for Underrepresented Minority Students

Suffolk County Community College will be awarded \$100,000 of a \$4 million grant as a partner institution in the SUNY Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation (SUNY LSAMP) program. The program is a collaboration of 14 SUNY schools who are partnering in the new five-year National Science Foundation (NSF) grant designed to increase undergraduate and graduate degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) among underrepresented minority student populations.

"The strength and success of Suffolk's STEM scholars and the vital role of community colleges, particularly Suffolk, remain crucial entry points and valued partners in this LSAMP alliance within SUNY. This results in long ranging benefits for our diverse students, enabling them to bridge from the community college to the baccalaureate level, on to graduate school and into the STEM workforce-the next generation of STEM scholars," said Suffolk County Community College President Dr. Shaun L. McKay.

Dr. Candice Foley, Suffolk County Community College will serve as a SUNY LSAMP Associate Director for the alliance; responsible for community college activities, successful 2-4 year transfers, and as a liaison to National Science Foundation (NSF) programs. The five-year award includes funds for stipends to Suffolk STEM students to engage in authentic research experiences – a known high impact practice for increasing participation and completion by underrepresented populations in STEM. Stony Brook and the other SUNY schools will look to expand the alliance and create additional STEM curriculum opportunities for students.

Over the next five years, the three leading goals of the project will be to:

- Meet the continuing challenge of preparing under represented students for a successful transition into STEM majors;
- Provide experimental activities that lead to socialization into science; and
- Promote systemic change by broadening participation in research.

Since 1996, SUNY LSAMP has been an instrumental in shaping STEM education and forging new opportunities for UREP students to pursue and succeed in STEM programs and degrees in New York State and has garnered an 11-fold increase in STEM enrollment for minority students in the last 20 years in New York State. The program has also helped increase STEM bachelor's degrees by almost 300 percent. During the past five years, the program has been a catalyst to helping to nearly double community college students transferring to four-year STEM undergraduate programs.

Suffolk County Community College is building a two-story, 33,792- square-foot Renewable Energy and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Center on the Michael J. Grant, Brentwood campus that will be the first of its kind in the state community college system.

