

## 2007-2008 Improving Teacher Quality State Grant Program Recipients

### ***Nebraska United for Rural Science Education (NURSE)***

Project director: Roxanna Jokela  
Higher Education Partners: University of Nebraska Medical Center, Chadron State College  
High-Need LEAs\*: Santee, Umo<sup>n</sup>ho<sup>n</sup> Nation and Wausa Public Schools  
Other Identified Partners: Chadron Middle School, Franklin, Gothenburg, Hastings Catholic, Hastings, Lexington, Loup City, Maywood, Newman Grove, Wayne, West Point-Beemer and Wisner-Pilger Public Schools

The goal of this project is to improve science content and pedagogy of teachers in rural schools. Teachers who have participated in previous UNMC workshops (from other funding sources) will partner with teachers from nine to 12 additional rural public and private schools. There will be two, four-day workshops, one in summer 2008 at Chadron State College and one in 2009 at UNMC. During the school year, teams will research a topic and present the information at the second workshop.

***Amount Funded:***                 ***\$59,420***

### ***Weaving a Web of Math Skills Across Nebraska***

Project director: Sandy Blankenship  
Higher Education Partner: Doane College  
High-Need LEAs: Walthill, Santee, Omaha Nation, Southern Valley, Giltner, Winside and Winnebago Public School Districts  
Other Identified Partners: Nebraska Educational Technology Association (NETA), Bloomfield, Cambridge, Central City, Columbus, Columbus Lakeview, Falls City, Gibbon, Holdrege, Johnson County Central, Ogallala, Ponca, Schuyler, Wakefield School Districts; and Educational Service Units #3, #4, #7, #8, #9, #10, #11, #15, #16, #17, and #18

This project will address the decline in educational math skills with research-based strategies to improve student learning. Seventeen learning teams with five participants each will be created across the state with principals included on the teams. Two, 2-day activities, a conference presentation and a one-day technology workshop will compose the formal training. The teams will work together online and meet locally to develop their projects.

***Amount Funded:***                 ***\$59,971***

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\* Local Educational Agencies

***Professional Development Math and Science Summer Technology Institutes, Continuation***

Project director: Laurence Rilett  
Higher Education Partner: University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
High-Need LEA: Overton Public School  
Other Identified Partners: Lincoln Pius X, Lincoln and Omaha Public Schools

A program to increase the math and science content knowledge of middle and high school teachers was funded in January 2006 and January 2007. This project introduced teachers to multimedia tools that provided real-life applications such as bridge design and crash testing. Teachers participated in the co-development of instructional modules that were integrated into their classrooms in the following school year. The original three-day summer institute was expanded to six days in 2007. The Nebraska Department of Education received a grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to cover some of the costs of the 2008 institute. ITQ funding for this project will cover costs not included in the DOT grant, including a graduate assistant, partial faculty salaries, travel, stipends and materials for additional teachers, and costs for transporting students to the activities (a new component in this year's project).

***Amount Funded: \$59,998***

***Improving Teacher Quality and Tracking Student Learning in Foreign Language Classrooms***

Project Director: Ali Moeller  
Higher Education Partner: University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
High-Need LEA: Ewing Public Schools  
Other Partners: None to date

Initially funded in 2003-04, this project provides a two-week immersion experience for 30 Spanish teachers on the UNL campus. Following the first year of funding, the Nebraska LinguaFolio was developed to track student learning. UNL received funding again in 2004-05 and 2005-06 for the immersion experience and to instruct teachers in the implementation of the LinguaFolio in their classrooms. 2007-2008 funding will do the same. Through the immersion experience, participants are able to improve their Spanish language skills and content-specific pedagogical expertise, as well as learn to integrate the LinguaFolio into their curriculum the following school year.

***Amount Funded: \$87,714.94***

### ***Project L.I.F.E.: Literacy Is For Everyone***

Project Director: Amy Hill, ESU #1 (Wakefield)  
Higher Education Partner: Wayne State College  
High-Need LEAs: Winnebago, Omaha Nation, Santee, Walthill, Wausa, Winside and Niobrara Public Schools  
Other Identified Partners: Allen, Bloomfield, Coleridge, Creighton, Crofton, Emerson-Hubbard, Hartington, Homer, Laurel-Concord, Newcastle, Ponca, Randolph, South Sioux City, Pender, Wayne, Wynot and Wakefield Public Schools

This project targets middle grade teachers in northeast Nebraska. First funded in 2006-07, the goal of the project is to improve content knowledge in analyzing nonfiction text and using comprehension and questioning strategies. This year's project will also cover vocabulary strategies. Aligned with the Nebraska Reading Standards, the professional development activities will take place in summer 2008 and during the following school year with 25 participants.

***Amount Funded: \$83,282***

### ***Summer Spanish Teaching Endorsement Workshops***

Project Director: Marie Trayer  
Higher Education Partner: Nebraska Wesleyan University  
High-Need LEAs: Keya Paha County Schools  
Other Identified Partners: Educational Service Units #1, #10, and #17

In 2003-2004, the Nebraska Department of Education identified 95 teachers who were teaching Spanish but did not hold endorsements in Spanish. In January 2005, an Improving Teacher Quality grant funded the first year of a project designed to provide an accessible program of courses for completing a subject endorsement in Spanish. The second year of funding was awarded in January 2006. A third year funded in 2007 helped 13 participants complete the courses for endorsements. As included in this grant, a fourth year of funding allows 13 additional teachers who initially needed a large number of courses to complete the last courses for their endorsement. The program will take place on the Nebraska Wesleyan campus and will consist of one intermediate level and three advanced level courses.

***Amount Funded: \$44,624***