

## **2009-10 Improving Teacher Quality State Grant Recipients**

### ***Metropolitan English Teacher Link: Connecting for Change***

*Project Director:* Dr. Sarah Edwards

- *Higher education partner (teachers college):* University of Nebraska at Omaha, Teacher Education Department
- *Higher education partner (arts and sciences):* University of Nebraska at Omaha, English Department
- *High-need LEA:* Omaha Public Schools
- *Other identified partner:* MOAC (Metropolitan Omaha Educational Consortium)

The goal of this project is to develop teacher leaders and to sustain those leaders through a formal network of professionals devoted to literacy teaching and learning. Since much previous attention and funding have focused on early literacy, this project will emphasize literacy in the middle and high school grades. Teachers in the Omaha metro area will be invited to a workshop on the UNO campus, have access to a Web site, and be involved in a mentoring project. Project directors hope to ultimately reach 500 Omaha English/language arts teachers.

**Amount funded: \$79,257**

### ***Geography Education Professional Development Workshops Coordinated by the Geographic Educators of Nebraska***

*Project Director:* Dr. Randy Bertolas

- *Higher education partner (teachers college):* Wayne State College, School of Education and Counseling
- *Higher education partner (arts and sciences):* Wayne State College, School of Natural and Social Sciences
- *High-need LEA:* Scottsbluff Public Schools
- *Other identified partner:* Lincoln North Star High School

Geography teachers and those interested in integrating geography into their curriculum will be eligible to apply for one of two two-week workshops. "Geography of the Frontier – and Beyond," to be held in Scottsbluff, will focus on rural geography topics. "Geography of the City –Lincoln," held in Lincoln, will focus on urban geography topics. Each workshop is planned for 20 teachers and the proposal is for workshops to be held in summer 2010 and 2011, i.e., four workshops reaching 80 teachers.

**Amount funded: \$59,800**

## ***Going the Distance: A Interactive On Line Teacher Development Project for Teachers of World Languages***

*Project Director: Ali Moeller*

- *Higher education partner (teachers college):* University of Nebraska-Lincoln, College of Education and Human Sciences
- *Higher education partner (arts and sciences):* University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Department of Modern Languages and Literatures
- *High-need LEA:* Omaha Public Schools
- *Other identified partners:* none to date

This project will help 15 teachers develop technology skills while improving their target language skills (German, Spanish, French) and cultural knowledge. A two-day workshop in Lincoln will provide the foundation for the use of technology. Through a subsequent online graduate course teachers will become proficient in the use of technology in the language classroom and subsequently serve as trainers for other teachers. The online format will allow teachers around the world to access to modules developed in the course. An added benefit will be the opportunity for Nebraska teachers to communicate with native speakers worldwide.

**Amount funded: \$61,640**

## ***Writing Ways Out West: Better Writing Instruction by Trails, Rails, & Rivers***

*Project Director: Anne Schmit*

- *Higher education partner (teachers college):* University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- *Higher education partner (arts and sciences):* Mid-Plains Community College
- *High-need LEAs:* Dundy County Stratton High School, Medicine Valley Jr.-Sr. High School, Thedford High School
- *Other identified partners:* St. Luke's Elementary School, Platte Valley Christian Academy, Our Redeemer Lutheran School, St. Paul's Lutheran Elementary School, North Platte Catholic Schools

Associated with the Nebraska Writing Project, this activity will start with pre-workshop reading assignments coupled with a weeklong online discussion and conclude with an eight day hands-on work session. The work session will be held at sites in west central Nebraska that relate to the workshop theme. Over half of the participants will be from high-need and/or low-performing schools in south central Nebraska. Funding is recommended for up to 24 teachers.

**Amount funded: \$30,283**

## ***A Statewide Project for Creative & Challenging Classrooms***

*Project Director:* Sandy Blankenship

- *Higher education partner (teachers college):* Doane College
- *Higher education partner (arts and sciences):* Doane College
- *High-need LEAs:* Santee Community Schools, Chambers Public Schools, Southern Valley Schools, Franklin Public Schools, Wausa Public Schools, Niobrara Public Schools
- *Other identified partners:* ESU #1, ESU #2, ESU #4, ESU #6, ESU #7, ESU #8, ESU #9, ESU #10, ESU #11, ESU #16, ESU #17, and Nebraska Educational Technology Association (NETA)

This project will focus on curriculum standards, technology, brain research, and content in the fields of art and language arts to help teachers put creativity back into their classrooms. Fourteen learning teams from across Nebraska with five teachers on each team will be created with team members eventually sharing model projects with their ESUs, districts, and schools. Two 2-day activities, one day working with creative technology, a conference presentation, and a minimum of four online chats will compose the formal training. The meetings and activities will be held at three locations across the state to make attendance possible for all participants.

**Amount funded: \$59,975**