

DATE: July 23, 2015

SUBJECT: Diversity in Teaching Grant Awards, 2015-2017

ACTION RECOMMENDED: Information

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Every two years, the Tennessee Higher Education Commission administers the Diversity in Teaching (DIT) Program which provides funds, awarded on a competitive basis, to Tennessee colleges and universities. The Diversity in Teaching Grant is a competitive matching grant program that aims to increase the number of qualified teachers from underrepresented groups committed to diversity as an instructional tool and entering the teaching profession in grades K-12.

Diversity in Teaching grants were awarded to institutions whose proposals emphasized curriculum and retention strategies that will enable students to progress through teacher education programs, on passing the PRAXIS examination, and ultimately, on obtaining licensure. Proposals were allowed a maximum funding level of \$50,000 annually and programs will be funded for the period July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2017.

An Advisory Committee consisting of both K-12 and higher education experts met on April 28, 2015, to review grant proposals and make funding recommendations. The Advisory Committee included the following individuals:

- Deanna Morris-Stacey, Tennessee Board of Regents
- Gloria R. Gammell, University of Tennessee
- Patrick L. Meldrim, TICUA
- Patrice Watson, Tennessee Department of Education
- Latonya Todd, Tennessee Higher Education Commission
- Kim Martin, Tennessee Higher Education

A total of eight proposals were submitted and four proposals were recommended for funding. The four proposals recommended for funding totaled \$395,884 over a two year period.

The Advisory Committee recommended the following projects to receive funding for 2015-17:

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga <i>Each One, Reach One</i> Program Director: Sandy Cole	\$99,984
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The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga will use Diversity in Teaching funds to continue the Each One Reach program in partnership with Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE). Each student will be given a scholarship that

covers partial tuition and a textbook stipend. UTC will: (1) recruit 12 teacher candidates that reside in Tennessee and often lack access to financial support; (2) recruit candidates for HCDE critical need areas; (3) focus on clinical experiences to prepare participants for the realities of education; (4) emphasize diversity as a vital instructional tool; (5) provide early intervention and preparation for the PRAXIS exam and other academic hurdles; and (6) offer supports and resources that assist individual students with unique needs and forge a community of learners through a cohort model.

University of Tennessee at Knoxville <i>Diversity in Teaching Intern Program</i> Program Director: Jamia Stokes	\$100,000
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The University of Tennessee at Knoxville will utilize funds for 30 teacher licensure student interns from underrepresented populations. The funding will be used to provide stipends for these interns and offset other educational expenses incurred during the internship year. Students selected to participate in this program have already completed the undergraduate teacher licensure program and are ready to enter the graduate level teaching internship.

Freed Hardeman University <i>Diversity in Teaching Recruiting and Training Initiative</i> Program Director: Dr. Elizabeth Saunders	\$95,900
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Freed Hardeman University will utilize Diversity in Teaching funds for five teacher licensure students from underrepresented populations. Students selected to participate in this program will receive scholarships to complete the teacher education program within two years of their initial participation in the program. With the assistance of partner school districts, program participants will complete on site practicums and their student teaching experiences.

Lee University <i>STEPS: Systematic Techniques to Equalize Personnel in Schools</i> Program Director: Gary Riggins	\$100,000
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The Diversity in Teaching funds at Lee University will be used for scholarships and Praxis exam fees for students. This program will fund 10-15 undergraduate or graduate students. The purpose of the STEPS program is to recruit, prepare and support teacher candidates committed to diversity in Tennessee P-12 schools. Priority will be given to minority candidates, candidates preparing to teach high need content (science, math, and special education) and individuals who are committed to working with diverse or underrepresented populations.

Program directors convened at THEC on May 5, 2015 for a mandatory technical assistance workshop.