

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE JUNE 3, 2019

## Second Cohort of PhysTEC Fellows Announced

**APS Contact:** Thomas Hone (hone@aps.org)

College Park, MD -- June 3, 2019 - The Physics Teacher Education Coalition (PhysTEC), whose mission is to improve and promote the education of future physics teachers, announces its second cohort of PhysTEC Fellows. Teams from five institutions were recognized as Fellows and will receive support to build and enhance high school physics teacher education programs. The PhysTEC Fellows come from Bridgewater State University (BSU), Clemson University, Colgate University, The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), and the University of Washington Bothell.

The PhysTEC project will support the implementation of planned activities at these institutions as part of a larger effort to combat a shortage of qualified physics teachers. PhysTEC will offer tools and strategies to improve their programs, recognition from APS and AAPT to help build institutional support, connections with national leaders in physics teacher education, and advice on external resources to support physics teacher preparation activities. Fellows will receive travel support to attend the national PhysTEC conference in 2020 and 2021 and will participate in video-conferences to exchange ideas and updates with the entire cohort.

### **Bridgewater State University**

BSU has a legacy of being a teacher's college, which has helped them to become the largest producer of teachers in Massachusetts, graduating over 400 students that enter the teaching profession each year. Most recently, the undergraduate science programs were revised due to receiving the NSF STEP grant. PhysTEC Fellows Jeff Williams, Allison Daubert, Tom King, and Steve Krajleski look couple this initiative with PhysTEC to increase interest in STEM education and in physics teaching education at BSU by exploring new avenues of collaboration between departments and the use of learning assistants as peer tutors for their introductory physics courses.

### **Clemson University**

A primary mission of Clemson University is its commitment to engaging its students in teaching and public service. PhysTEC Fellows Sean Brittain and Chad Sosolik look to use this commitment and the strength of Clemson being a flagship institution in the state with a stable, growing number of physics majors to further align the Department of Physics and Astronomy with teacher education. They will do this by implementing a Learning Assistant program. These learning assistants will be used to facilitate small group discussion, guide work in lab sections and facilitate group discussion during lectures. In addition, they will continue to look for ways to utilize their existing connections with neighboring South Carolina school districts.

### **Colgate University**

In recent years, the Department of Physics and Astronomy at Colgate University has experienced strong growth, nearly doubling the average number of graduates. PhysTEC Fellows Beth Parks and Meg Gardner look to use this growth to produce physics teachers in the state of New York, where it is projected that by 2022 there will be an overall shortage of 10,000 teachers. With support from their university, Parks and Gardner will create materials to publicize certification opportunities to students in physics and astronomy and work closely with the NYS Department of Education to streamline course requirements for these certifications.

### **The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley**

UTRGV is a PhysTEC member and a Hispanic-serving institution whose mission statement expresses the goal of creating an environment of student success and community engagement by creating an innovative and accessible educational environment. PhysTEC Fellows Liang Zeng and Nicolas Pereyra will look to harness the ideals of this mission by enhancing the advertisement of physics teaching as a career among physics majors and by collaborating with the University Learning Center Director to implement a Learning Assistant program.

### **University of Washington Bothell**

The University of Washington Bothell is known for its student experience grounded in hands-on learning, close relationships with faculty as teachers and mentors, and personalized support from staff who are dedicated to student success. PhysTEC Fellows Rachel Scherr, Carrie Tzou, Paola Rodriguez Hidalgo, and Joy Shapiro Key leverage these ideals into creating an atmosphere of sustainability for physics teacher education. To accomplish this, they will collaborate with the university in designing a course on teaching physics to meet discipline-specific pedagogy requirements; assist it in obtaining state approval of a teacher certification program; and work with other departments to ensure that state competency requirements are being met.

###

**About PhysTEC**

The Physics Teacher Education Coalition (PhysTEC) is a project of the American Physical Society and the American Association of Physics Teachers. PhysTEC receives support from the National Science Foundation and the APS Campaign for the 21st Century.