

Nine grants awarded for recruiting physics teachers

Nationwide physics teacher preparation program funds colleges and universities to recruit students into this high-need area

The Physics Teacher Education Coalition (PhysTEC) recently selected nine sites to receive recruiting grants in order to explore new approaches for increasing the number of new high school physics teachers. Recruiting grants of up to \$10,000 per year for three years for a maximum total of \$30,000 were awarded with a goal of establishing a cohort of higher education facilities that place a strong emphasis on developing successful recruiting strategies that can be implemented at a wide variety of institutions, including primarily undergraduate institutions.

The nationwide need for physics teachers is acute; only one third of physics teachers have a degree in the field. In a 2014 survey of K-12 teacher educators conducted by the American Association for Employment in Education, physics was rated the field with the greatest shortage of new teachers.

The sites awarded include Boise State University; Bowdoin College; East Tennessee State University; Indiana University South Bend; Northwestern Oklahoma State University (a multi-institution site involving four OK universities); Salisbury University; Sonoma State University; University of Massachusetts Dartmouth; and University of Wyoming. The request for proposals process began in May 2014 with sites submitting full proposals in June. After a panel review, sites were selected for funding beginning in September 2014.

PhysTEC, a flagship education program of the American Physical Society (APS), aims to improve the education of future physics teachers by transforming physics departments, creating successful models for physics teacher education programs, and disseminating best practices. With the addition of the newly funded sites, the project has funded a total of 45 sites to build physics teacher education programs (see www.phystec.org for more details). While PhysTEC supported sites that receive comprehensive funding deal with the entire teacher education continuum, recruiting grants focus solely on recruiting more future high school physics teachers.

The awarded sites will use PhysTEC grants to enhance activities directly aimed at increasing the number of physics teachers, including boosting marketing efforts, improving advising, creating streamlined pathways to the physics degree/certification, providing financial support, and developing early teaching experiences. The grants are

also used to fund part-time positions for a Teacher in Residence (TIR), which have proven critical in the success of other PhysTEC supported sites.

The PhysTEC program is led by APS in partnership with the American Association of Physics Teachers (AAPT), with support from the National Science Foundation. For more information, contact [Monica Plisch](#), Director of PhysTEC and APS Associate Director of Education and Diversity.

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About APS

The American Physical Society (www.aps.org) is a non-profit membership organization working to advance and diffuse the knowledge of physics through its outstanding research journals, scientific meetings, and education, outreach, advocacy and international activities. APS represents over 50,000 members, including physicists in academia, national laboratories and industry in the United States and throughout the world. Society offices are located in College Park, MD (Headquarters), Ridge, NY, and Washington, DC.