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## Cal State East Bay receives grant

SUBMITTED BY BARRY ZEPEL

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A \$1.5 million grant from the National Science Foundation has been awarded to Cal State East Bay to support the university's expanding focus on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines in response to a shortage of highly qualified science and math teachers in California.

The award comes from the NSF's Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program, a national scholarship fund for K-12 math and science teachers. It is named for the co-founder of Fairchild Semiconductor and Intel, a Silicon Valley pioneer who is credited with inventing the microchip.

Without strong teachers, research has shown, students are unprepared for college-level STEM majors, leading to a decrease in qualified graduates to fill high-technology jobs in the state. With the grant, Cal State East Bay will support students obtaining a teaching credential and a master's degree in education as they work as teachers in local high-needs high schools.

CSUEB received its first Noyce Scholarship grant in 2008, under the guidance of Professor Kathy Hann (math and computer science) and Professor David Stronck (teacher education). For this fellowship grant, Hann teamed with Associate Professor Valerie Helgren-Lempesis (teacher education) and Assistant Professor Caron Inouye (biological sciences), along with Rachele DeStefano of the Alameda County Office of Education.

"I think one thing that makes [Cal State East Bay] stand out is that we in the College of Science do work so well with the teacher education faculty," Hann said.

Eight students in the 2009-10 and 2010-11 academic years will receive financial aid to cover student fees for the credential year. Students beginning the

credential program in math or science this fall will be eligible for the fellowship.

After earning their credentials, recipients are obligated to work for four years as a math or science teacher while taking courses for the master's program. In addition to selection of an option in curriculum development, students can also choose to take the courses online to fit in with their teaching schedules.

The flexibility of the online courses will appeal to students throughout California, according to Helgren-Lempesis. The scholarship funding will cover a salary supplement for those four years, which is another definite incentive, Hann said.

Students also will attend a series of summer seminars taught by Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) scientists and other professionals as part of the master's curriculum for students with a science focus. In the final seminar, the students will conduct research with one of their LLNL mentors and share authorship on a paper, poster session or journal article. "This is unique to our program," Hann said.

Along with the LLNL partnership, Hann said other benefits of the CSUEB Noyce Fellowship will be support from teacher mentors in the district, as well as CSUEB faculty. She and the other faculty members involved are working with the Alameda County Office of Education, through which the students will perform their student teaching requirements.

Rhea Williamson, CSUEB's associate vice president for Research and Sponsored Programs, noted that the Noyce Award is in part a result of "a dedicated faculty working together to develop innovative programs that directly support student teaching and learning, and that leverage our partnerships with local national laboratories, industry and school districts."