

CCPI-STEM SELECTS SIX COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATORS FOR FELLOWSHIPS

CCPI-STEM has selected six community college educators for its fellowship program.

The fellowship is one facet of the Community College Presidents' Initiative in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (CCPI-STEM), which aims to strengthen community college faculty and administrators and nurture their leadership skills in order to grow and diversify the STEM technician workforce.

All individuals in this inaugural cohort of CCPI-STEM fellows are pursuing graduate degrees and conducting research related to STEM education and workforce development at community colleges.

The CCPI-STEM Fellows Program — funded by an [Advanced Technological Education](#) (ATE) program grant from the [National Science Foundation](#) (NSF) — provides an honorarium of \$5,000 annually for two years to each participant. Support during the second year is contingent on satisfactory progress in the first year.

In addition to their graduate studies and research, the fellows are expected to participate in professional development and mentoring activities to prepare them for future STEM leadership roles in community colleges. CCPI-STEM welcomes the following individuals to its first cohort of fellows.



Bethany Sansing-Helton is lead equity fellow as well as an instructor and co-chair of the Math Department at [Madison Area Technical College](#) (MATC). Before joining MATC, she worked as a mechanical engineer at Lockheed Martin in Denver. Bethany has a bachelor's degree in physics, a master's degree in mechanical engineering, and a master's degree in teaching. She is pursuing a doctor of philosophy degree in educational leadership and policy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her focus is the improvement and success of diverse students in STEM. At MATC, she has been involved in Achieving the Dream activities and minority student-focused NSF programs such as the Louis Stokes Alliances for Minority Participation Program. Bethany says, "I want to support classroom action that can be effectively translated across contexts and lead to improvements that are broadly implemented and make a meaningful difference in closing equity gaps in STEM outcomes and employment."



Buffy Quinn is assistant dean of Natural and Applied Sciences at [Onondaga Community College](#) (New York). She was a geographic information system (GIS) analyst whose specialty was modeling remediation plans for Superfund sites prior to joining the faculty at Onondaga, a State University of New York institution. She has been involved in environmental research activities and was the principal investigator of an ATE grant at Onondaga. She continues to collaborate on several ATE projects in the GIS field and currently serves as Onondaga's grants manager. She is pursuing a doctor of education degree from the University of Southern Mississippi. Buffy says, "My college education gave me both hope and the knowledge I needed for a successful career as a geospatial analyst. This fellowship will ensure I can continue to play a critical role in changing the lives of students through higher education just as it changed mine."

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DeDe Griffith is vice president for workforce development at [Temple College](#) (Texas). She has over 26 years of teaching and workforce development program experience. She is pursuing a doctoral degree in the Community College Leadership Program at Kansas State University, Manhattan. Her doctoral work is based on the hypothesis that “engagement in STEM activities with rural high school students will improve STEM awareness and result in higher enrollment in STEM-related dual enrollment and matriculation to a STEM-related college program.”



Emily Halvorson-Otts is the dean of Sciences at [Pima Community College](#) (Arizona). She previously taught chemistry and has master’s degrees in chemistry and teaching. Emily is pursuing a doctor of education degree in community college leadership from Ferris State University. She has participated in The Chair Academy and been engaged in several NSF-funded grant programs.



Eugene Mahmoud is a professor of physics and engineering at [Mount San Antonio College](#) (California). Eugene is a first-year Explorer’s Fellow in the Engineering Education Doctoral Program at Purdue University. He also currently serves as a principal investigator of an NSF grant project and is active in California’s Engineering Liaison Council. His undergraduate degree is in aerospace engineering, and he has two graduate degrees in mechanical engineering. His research will focus on how engineering and technology students experience different segments of education systems as they prepare to enter the workforce.



Michael Silva is a professor of biotechnology and biological sciences at [Solano Community College](#) (California), where he earned an associate degree. He has bachelor’s and master’s degrees in biology and cell informatics. Michael has extensive work experience in the biotechnology industry. He is pursuing a doctor of education degree in organizational change and leadership at the University of Southern California. His research focuses on student success in biotechnology and manufacturing. Michael says, “Working in the biomanufacturing field allowed me, for the first time in my life, not to worry about how I was going to afford to put food on the table for my family. I am dedicated to ensuring the same opportunities exist for others while ensuring we work together to address ongoing disparities many communities face. It is an honor to be selected as one of the community college leaders to advance our nation’s ability to improve humanity by developing the STEM workforce as a CCPI-STEM fellow.”

In 2022, CCPI-STEM received 29 applications, and eight finalists were interviewed.

The criteria used to evaluate applicants includes consideration of educational background, STEM-related experience, leadership potential, STEM leadership potential, STEM community engagement, prior research experience, and the proposed research as it relates to STEM and/or workforce education at community colleges.

The next deadline for fellowship applications is Sept. 15. For more information, contact Dr. Ashok Agrawal at Ashok@AgrawalAdvisory.com.

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