

## CCPI-STEM REGIONAL AFFILIATES MEETINGS ROUNDUP

The CCPI-STEM Regional Network Chairs have begun convening virtual meetings in their respective regions to share information about the positive impacts of grants from the [National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education](#) program.

The meetings are open to community college presidents, senior administrators, and STEM faculty – particularly those from community colleges that have never had an ATE award – to learn about mentoring and other resources available to help prepare competitive grant proposals in partnership with industry and other education sectors.

Go to [CCPI-STEM.org](https://ccpi-stem.org) to learn more about NSF ATE and the CCPI regions or to express interest in your institution becoming a regional affiliate.

### Southwest Shares ATE Successes at Dallas College and Columbus State

Southwest Regional Network Chair Dr. Jennifer Wimbish, president emeritus of the [Dallas College System](#) for which she served as president of Cedar Valley Campus for 13 years, set the upbeat tone of the February 8 meeting with a Rocky-themed video about what can be accomplished with ATE grants. Thirty-five people from 30 institutions were in attendance.

She then introduced Kevin Rooney, director of Grants Administration at [Columbus State Community College](#), and Tricia Thomas-Anderson, Ph.D. CGW, senior director of Sponsored Programs, Dallas College, who shared their first-hand knowledge of [the National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education \(ATE\) grant process](#).

Thomas-Anderson's tips for successful ATE grant proposals are **Align** the proposed project with institutional goals; **Develop** a project team; **Outline** roles; **Plan** a budget; **Use** the [Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#) and the [ATE program solicitation](#) for submission requirements; **Check** Fastlane/Research.gov accounts; **Submit** ATE proposals early.

### Northeast Focuses on ATE as Higher Education Venture Capital

Northeast Regional Network Chair Dr. Anne Kress, president of [Northern Virginia Community College](#), convened the Northeast's first meeting virtually on Feb. 22 with 35 people from 21 institutions.

Kress pointed out that ATE grants don't supplant other funding, but supplement it as higher education venture capital. "Money grows more money, and [ATE] grants are prestigious," she said. The ATE program has disbursed \$1.2 billion since 1993, but only 22% of community colleges have taken advantage of this funding source.

"Let's fix this ... There is power to be shared across community colleges working together! Our faculty, working with our students and our industry partners, are critical to this success, and community college presidents need to support that work," she said.

Kress encouraged attendees to use [CCPI-STEM](#) to connect with ATE projects that offer mentoring and other resources that can help community college faculty and staff members prepare competitive ATE grant proposals.

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“We won’t send you any advertising and we won’t send you a bill. We’re going to make sure you get the right information you need to be successful with NSF ATE grants. No cost, no obligation, nothing due in 90 days— what we want to do instead is get money to you,” she said.

## **Pacific SW Region Builds Excitement for “Formative Transformative Work”**

**Pacific Southwest Regional Chair Dr. Pamela T. Luster** says she became involved in CCPI-STEM because “I love formative transformative work and I feel like that is what this is. This is really reaching out and saying to folks ‘Let’s get these grants.’” Luster was president of [San Diego Mesa College](#) for 11 years before she retired last year.

On March 23, Luster chaired the Pacific Southwest Region’s first meeting. Twenty-one representatives of 16 community colleges in Southern California, Arizona, and New Mexico attended the meeting where information about the NSF ATE program and CCPI-STEM, which is an ATE project, were explained.

“As leaders in our community colleges it’s important for us to encourage our folks on our campuses to really think about how they can cultivate the resources that they need to fulfill the big dreams they have for their programs,” she said.

Luster emphasized that “the why” of an ATE grant proposal is much more important than the size of the project. She told representatives of rural colleges their regions’ STEM workforces are important to NSF.

During the discussion, Valorie Piper, principal investigator and executive director of the [National Center for Supply Chain Automation](#) at [Norco College](#), highlighted what the center’s collaborations with education and industry partners have accomplished with 12 years of ATE grant support. Its deliverables include an e-textbook and six industry-recognized certifications.

## **Pacific Points to ATE Grants as Way to Address DEI Issues**

**Pacific Regional Network Chair Dr. Frank Chong**, superintendent/president of [Santa Rosa Junior College \(SRJC\)](#), makes the case for pursuing [Advanced Technological Education \(ATE\)](#) grants by pointing out that the advanced technology programs they support at community colleges, which nationally enroll more people of color than any other higher education sector, lead more black, brown, and yellow people to careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

“It’s important to see this as a workforce and equity issue,” he said during a March 28 webinar attended by 34 people from 20 institutions. He suggests presidents and faculty consider “What’s happening in your district regarding regional workforce needs?” Then partner with employers to develop innovative approaches for ATE projects that will test ways to meet those needs.

Chong noted that NSF’s merit review is “a rigorous process” and that Santa Rosa has submitted three ATE grant proposals that have all been declined for funding. However, he’s not giving up, and Santa Rosa faculty have applied to ATE mentoring programs and accessed other [resources](#) through CCPI-STEM.

“All of us want to get a grant. We want to learn the how-to ... The only way to turn it around is to learn more about what the grant guidelines are,” he said.

During the discussion when other presidents shared their experiences with the ATE program, [Porterville College](#) President Claudia Habib called ATE grants “a great way to expand programs.”

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## Southeast Explains Benefits of Strategic Use of ATE Grants

Southeast Regional Network Chair Dr. Edwin R. Massey said the last 15 years of his 32 years as president of [Indian River State College](#), from which he retired in 2020, were the “most pleasing, most interesting, and most fun” because of the 11 ATE grants the college received during those years. The amazing trend began when he encouraged the technical faculty to obtain external funds for new programs. Two faculty members came to him with ideas for ATE grants.

“If you challenge your faculty, the ones that are really, really interested, the ones that are entrepreneurial, the ones that are most innovative will surface to the top and they will bring proposals to you,” Massey told the 28 people from 15 institutions who attended the March 31 virtual meeting. The ATE grants individually and collectively not only modernized several technical programs at Indian River, they shifted the college’s culture in ways that Massey said made faculty happier.

“This is not an overnight event. This is a long-term commitment that becomes part of your strategic plan,” he said of the process of preparing ATE grant proposals.

Another unexpected bonus for Indian River State Colleges was that successful execution of ATE grants made it easier to attract other funding.

“ATE and NSF really get attention, and then it leads—and this is a big thing—it leads to philanthropists noticing your college and your college programs. Big donors don’t give money usually to programs that are antiquated,” he said.

With about five months until the next ATE proposal deadline, Massey pointed out there is still time for community college presidents to encourage faculty to form teams and contact employers and other education sectors to develop proposals for submission by October 5, 2023.

“If you are not currently working on a proposal you have time to pull together people at your college. Talk to [industry] partners in your community. Talk to public schools. Talk to universities and form partnerships and get a proposal in by October 5 for this next cycle of grants,” he said.

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