

## CCPI-STEM FELLOWS GROW PROFESSIONALLY & PROMOTE THE ATE PROGRAM

The CCPI-STEM's [Fellows Program](#) continues to benefit participants, the college communities where Fellows work, and the Advanced Technological Education (ATE) community.

"Fellows distinguish themselves in various ways," Dr. Ashok Agrawal, Coordinator of CCPI-STEM, reported at the CCPI-STEM Affinity Meeting in October. He pointed out that in addition to their full-time job responsibilities Fellows pursue graduate degrees and serve as ambassadors for the ATE program. Since 2022 CCPI-STEM has selected 18 individuals (in three cohorts) to serve as Fellows; five more Fellows will be added in spring 2026.

In addition to a two-year honorarium of \$5,000 per year, each Fellow receives mentoring from an experienced community college educator to help them develop their science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education leadership skills.

"The current and retired college presidents, chancellors, and administrators who serve as CCPI-STEM mentors understand what it means to be a college leader and give Fellows a sounding board for their research and career plans," Agrawal said. He noted that Fellows also learn from each other during CCPI-STEM virtual and in-person meetings.

### Fellows' Activities

Agrawal reported that during the past year Fellows gave technical presentations at professional meetings, pep talks to small groups and inspirational speeches during large meetings at their institutions, guided their colleagues in proposal writing, and promoted ATE and STEM programs and careers in their communities.

Recent accomplishments by Fellows include the following:

- Dr. Diane Rhodes being promoted to chair of the Computing Technologies Department at [Red Rocks Community College](#), CO, beginning in January 2026.
- Amanda Colosimo completing six doctoral program courses at the University of South Carolina, passing her comprehensive exam, and having the first chapter of her dissertation approved. At [Monroe Community College](#), NY, where she is a geology professor, Colosimo co-hosts the Coffee Break Classroom: Brewed for Higher Ed podcast and recently led a workshop entitled From Data to Discovery: Leveraging AI and Action Research for Classroom Impact.
- LaToya Chandler, Interim Director, Watson and Andrews Centers at [Santa Fe College](#), NM, presenting Facilitating Student Engagement in Guitars, Rocketry, and Robotics to Increase Self-Efficacy in STEM at the High Impact Technology Exchange Conference.
- Emily Halvorson-Otts, Acting Vice Provost of Academic Affairs at [Pima Community College](#), AZ, receiving the 2024 Distinguished Scholar-Practitioner Award at [Ferris State University](#) for her doctoral work in community college leadership.
- Dr. Buffy Quinn, Project Manager at Parsons Corporation, co-authoring Applying Project Management Skills to NSF ATE Funded Grants: A Roadmap to Success for First Time Grantees about [Mentor-Connect's](#) PI 101 program. The paper was published in the [proceedings](#) from the 2024 American Society for Engineering Education Conference and Exposition.

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## Fellows Praise Program

Fellows consistently praise the mentoring they receive and other aspects of the program.

"The CCPI-STEM fellowship provided essential financial support and a community of peers, whose camaraderie and shared experiences offered mutual encouragement and collaborative insights that sustained me through the demands of my doctoral program, enabling me to complete and defend my dissertation," Diane Rhodes wrote in a recent email.

"This fellowship experience strengthened my professional network and leadership abilities in STEM education and workforce development, deepening my expertise in computing technologies," Rhodes concluded.

Meanwhile, Amanda Colosimo, who is in the second year of her graduate program, wrote, "I am deeply appreciative of the CCPI-STEM Board's continued support, which has been instrumental in my academic progress and professional growth during this foundational year of my doctoral journey."

Amanda Hanley is grateful that her mentor DeDe Griffith's directions and corrections have saved her time. "She offers incredible feedback that's applicable, constructive and productive," Hanley wrote in a report. Hanley is an assistant professor of mathematics at [Cuyahoga Community College](#), OH; Griffith is the vice president of Workforce Development at [Temple College, TX](#), and was a 2022 CCPI-STEM Fellow.

As someone who is early on in her teaching career, [South Texas College](#) Biology Instructor Elizabeth Ann A. Gonzalez said she rarely spoke with people outside her department, much less college leaders, until she was selected as a CCPI-STEM Fellow in 2024. She now interacts frequently with other Fellows and community college leaders throughout the United States.



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