



NSF Grant to Advance STEM Career Diversity at FAU

Boca Raton, Fla. (Oct. 5, 2016) – Florida Atlantic University prides itself on its diversity, and a new \$249,000 grant from the National Science Foundation will allow a team of researchers to help grow it even more. ADVANCE IT-Catalyst: Transforming Faculty Gender Diversity at Florida Atlantic University seeks to develop systemic approaches to increase the participation, retention and advancement of women and underrepresented minorities in academic STEM careers. The project will be led by Russell Ivy, Ph.D., principal investigator and Associate Provost for Academic Affairs.

“It is important that the gender and ethnic diversity of the student body be mirrored in the faculty,” he said. “Research has shown that having like role models can be important for student success.”

The ADVANCE-IT program will support an institutional self-assessment and will pilot best practices gleaned from visits to other ADVANCE institutions. The program will leverage two existing initiatives to be more inclusive to women and all underrepresented minorities, both male and female. The first initiative involves a research mentoring program in which senior faculty are paired with junior faculty to develop proposals. The second initiative is a leadership development program that will include training for department heads on recruiting and retaining women and faculty from minority populations. The program will focus on the disciplines at FAU with the greatest gender imbalance over the last decade: physical sciences, mathematics and engineering.

In addition to Ivy, the FAU ADVANCE leadership team consists of co-investigators Janet Blanks, Ph.D., Evonne Rezler, Ph.D., both of the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science; Nurgun Erdol, Ph.D., of the College of Engineering and Computer Science; Josephine Beoku-Betts, Ph.D., of the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters. Frankie Laanan, Ph.D. and Nancy Romance, Ph.D., both of the College of Education, will serve as internal evaluators.

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