



Boise State, Micron Foundation Partner to Educate New Generation of Math and Science Teachers

BOISE, Idaho, May 1, 2012 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Boise State University and the Micron Foundation have teamed up to entice Idaho's brightest science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) students into the state's classrooms as a new generation of teachers who excel in technical subjects.

The new program, called IDoTeach, is designed to meet a desperate need for Idaho science and math teachers in coming years by attracting a largely untapped pool of talented college students majoring in STEM subjects into secondary education careers.

"This is a significant shift in the way we prepare math and science teachers," said Louis Nadelson, a Boise State education professor who is part of the team spearheading the creation of the IDoTeach program at Boise State. "We've found that many students majoring in STEM are interested in teaching but do not pursue it as a career for a variety of reasons. This program will help identify those students early in their academic career so we can foster and support any interest in teaching and hopefully guide these technically-minded students into careers as teachers."

With \$300,000 in initial funding from the Micron Foundation, IDoTeach will replicate an innovative and highly successful teacher preparation program created at the University of Texas at Austin that has been duplicated at 29 universities around the country, including University of California, Berkeley, Louisiana State University, University of Houston and Florida State University. IDoTeach is the only replica of the University of Texas program in the eight-state Pacific Northwest and Northern Rocky Mountain region of the country.

"The Micron Foundation is excited to support the IDoTeach program at Boise State as we believe educators can inspire students to pursue a world full of possibilities," said Dee Mooney, executive director of the Micron Foundation. "These future educators with their solid STEM backgrounds will further bring hands-on and real-world applications into the classroom, sparking a passion in the next generation of scientists, engineers and mathematicians."

The Micron Foundation's support of IDoTeach is the latest strong history of support for education and Boise State.

Nadelson said a 2009 survey of Idaho principals, superintendents and administrators indicated a need for approximately 500 math teachers and 400 science teachers in the near term. That number is likely to grow over time due to population growth, expanded academic requirements in these subjects, teacher retirement and the increasingly technical nature of society in general. To meet that demand with qualified teachers, IDoTeach is designed to attract the widest range of bright science, mathematics, and computer science majors, prepare them with an advanced field-intensive curriculum, and retain them as teachers through support and ongoing professional development.

Through the IDoTeach program, underclass STEM majors who are interested in teaching will be trained and have the opportunity to teach fundamental math and science lessons to elementary and junior high school students. Those interested in obtaining a teacher certificate may then apply for full enrollment in the IDoTeach program where they will be able to pursue a degree in a STEM discipline and become certified as a secondary teacher.

Much of the funding will be used for student scholarships and stipends for mentor teachers who will oversee these students in their K-12 classrooms. Additionally, a team of master teachers, K-12 teachers who will become Boise State clinical faculty members, will be involved in teaching the core curriculum of the program.

"This is a pipeline issue that includes the development of a strong student understanding of science and math before college. Without that understanding, the pipeline begins to leak and crumble," said Nadelson. "By creating this program in Idaho, Boise State is being progressive and active in its approach to addressing this challenging problem and doing it with a program that is proven to be successful."

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About Boise State University

As an emerging metropolitan research university of distinction, Boise State University plays a crucial role in the region's economic development and famed quality of life. Idaho's largest institution of higher education offers nearly 200 degrees and certificates in seven colleges. While remaining committed to the strong teaching legacy that has resulted in 11 Idaho Professor of the Year awards since 1990, Boise State's added emphasis on innovation and creativity is fueling the fastest growing research program in Idaho.

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