



Office of Public Affairs
Division of University Advancement

News Release

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Release No: 0809-014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 9, 2008

Great Leaders for Great Schools Institute at Cal Poly Pomona Awarded \$2.5 Million Grant

Pomona, Calif. -- In collaboration with the Pomona Unified School District, the Great Leaders for Great Schools Institute at Cal Poly Pomona has been awarded a five-year, \$2.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The grant, which was recently announced by Rep. Grace Napolitano, D- Santa Fe Springs, will improve the work of K-12 administrators in public schools.

Under the university's College of Education & Integrative Studies, the Great Leaders for Great Schools Institute gives new administrators in underperforming urban schools additional resources to support teaching and learning. The Institute also encourages policy development and scholarly research in the field of educational leadership.

Beginning summer 2009, the Institute and Pomona Unified will train a total of 30 new school administrators through the School Leadership Development program. The program will prepare the administrators with leadership skills to handle the challenges of turning around underperforming urban schools in the district and eventually in the greater San Gabriel Valley.

"This kind of program is long overdue," said Stephen Davis, professor of educational leadership and the grant's administrator. "It is a unique program that tailors and centers its curriculum around Pomona Unified's specific needs, rather than a one-size-fits-all kind of training."

Modeled after similar programs in New York City schools, Delta State University and New Leaders for New Schools, a nonprofit organization, the program will be framed around a full-time, site-based apprenticeship and an innovative curriculum that emphasizes problem solving. With an emphasis on hands-on learning, each participant will be placed under the direction of a trained mentor principal who will provide individualized guidance and feedback on a daily basis.

The program will also provide graduates who are appointed to administrative positions in Pomona Unified with a year of follow-up, including executive coaching and topical seminars designed to sharpen management skills and support the transition from the classroom to administration.

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