

New Master's Degree, Scholarships To Help Ease Georgia's Science Teacher Shortage

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March 19, 2008 - [PRLog](#) -- In response to predictions that Georgia will experience a shortfall of almost 1,800 middle and high school science teachers by 2010, Kennesaw State University is offering two new opportunities to propel college students toward science teaching careers.

First, the new Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Secondary Science degree program will be launched in July.

The MAT is designed to accelerate certification of those currently holding bachelor's degrees in biology, chemistry, physics or a related field. The program requires completion of 48 hours of coursework, which is normally spread over four semesters, and in-school field experiences. Completion of the program leads to teacher certification in chemistry, biology or physics.

In addition, Robert Noyce Scholars Program scholarships are available by application through April 1. Under the Noyce program, students can receive \$5,000 to \$10,000 per year for up to two years.

Both initiatives are designed to encourage and support students who choose teaching careers, a need underscored by the current reality. For example, of Georgia's 25,000 public college graduates in 2006, only three became physics teachers and just nine accepted offers to teach chemistry.

In a 2007 report titled, "Math+Science=Success," University System of Georgia presidents documented the state's critical need for graduates and teachers of so-called "STEM" disciplines — science, technology, engineering and math. The report also made projections for helping meet those needs. KSU President Daniel S. Papp was a member of the STEM initiative.

The USG report cited an estimate suggesting the state will need to produce 2,060 middle school science and high school teachers of life sciences, chemistry, earth science and physics by 2010. By 2013, the reports projects, the university system will more than double production of middle and high school science teachers, from 267 to 590.

"The workforce implications of these estimates and projections are tremendous," Papp said. "It places the challenge on colleges and universities to really focus on helping the state meet these needs. It also creates opportunities for us to marshal resources, as we have done with these two programs."

Funded by the National Science Foundation, the Noyce scholars program was designed for KSU and Georgia Institute of Technology seniors pursuing science degrees.

A Noyce scholarship recipient receives funds to pay expenses during their senior year of undergraduate studies and during a year of study in the MAT program. Those receiving funds must commit to a year of teaching in a metro Atlanta public school district for every \$5,000 received, up to a \$20,000 maximum. Partnering school districts include Atlanta, Cobb County School, DeKalb, Fulton County and Paulding County.

Adrian Epps, associate dean of KSU's College of Science and Mathematics, said the MAT also can benefit

career-changers who need a path toward becoming certified teachers or those who hold undergraduate science degrees from other institutions. In a 2007 report titled, “Math+Science=Success,” University System of Georgia presidents documented the state’s critical need for graduates and teachers of so-called “STEM” disciplines — science, technology, engineering and math. The report also made projections for helping meet those needs. KSU President Daniel S. Papp was a member of the STEM initiative.

“There is such a well-documented and longstanding need for science teachers throughout the state,” said Epps, who has worked to improve educational quality in science and math since joining KSU in February 2007 and the previous 18 years in the Atlanta Public Schools.

“These programs are a great way to motivate KSU and Georgia Tech students toward teaching careers. But we’re also prepared to be flexible with other eligible MAT candidates to continue making a dent in the problem.”

For more information on KSU’s MAT Secondary Science program, e-mail grushton@kennesaw.edu.

To download a Noyce scholarship application, go to <http://www.GANoyceScholars.org>.

For more Kennesaw State University news, visit <http://access.kennesaw.edu>

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A member of the 35-unit University System of Georgia, Kennesaw State University is a comprehensive, residential institution with a growing student population of more than 20,000 from 132 countries. The third-largest university in Georgia, Kennesaw State offers more than 60 graduate and undergraduate degrees, including a new doctorate in education.

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