Roche Foundation continues its Emerging Leaders in STEM with a gift to Bloomfield College

There exists a nationwide effort to draw more students into the STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subjects. Leading the way, the Roche Foundation has given Bloomfield College a second gift to continue the work in bringing interested students into the STEM careers, especially first-generation students and underrepresented populations.

The goal of the Emerging Leaders in STEM (ELS) program is to increase the number of minority students studying the sciences and mathematics. Using several well-planned phases, students will be introduced to the STEM subjects through a variety of channels; pre-nursing majors and first-year students will be introduced through their general education courses, high school students will be exposed to STEM careers through recruitment activities, and monthly meetings, coaching and advisement for current STEM majors will focus on retention in the STEM subjects.

The Roche Foundation’s gift last year allowed many more students to participate in the Louis B. Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation or LSAMP, a consortium of nine colleges and universities in New Jersey that focus on recruiting and retaining students in the STEM subjects. By adding the Emerging Leaders in STEM to the LSAMP program, the number of participants grew significantly. The LSAMP program is expected to increase their student participation by 50 percent and the Roche Foundation is making this possible.

“We appreciate the partnership with Roche Foundation and its commitment to our students who are interested in pursuing careers in the fields of science, technology and mathematics,” says Richard Levao, president of Bloomfield College. “Together, we are addressing the critical national shortage of trained STEM professionals.”

The ELS program will consist of three phases. The first is to develop a bigger pipeline of students who are interested in the STEM subjects and need more information about careers available to them. This phase will include reaching out to high school students as well as current pre-nursing and first-year students who are involved in the new Geographies of Experience courses at the college. This series of courses is designed to give students a wide range of academic experiences to broaden their interests and potential career paths. The second phase is to recruit ELS scholars and support their transition into or retain them in the STEM subjects through their involvement in LSAMP activities, coaching, mentoring, and field trips. The third phase fully engages the ELS scholars either by full participation in LSAMP or as an LSAMP associate and by declaring a STEM-related major. Throughout all the phases, coaching and advisement is available by college faculty and staff.

“We are pleased to be able to provide additional funding for the Bloomfield College STEM program,” said Patricia Hughes, executive director, Roche Foundation. “Identifying students with a capacity for math and science and then unlocking the wonders of these subjects for them is something that is sorely needed if we want students to compete on a global scale. It is clear that the teachers and staff at the school have demonstrated their commitment to this endeavor and we applaud their efforts.”