



NEWS RELEASE

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GEORGIA LAUNCHES WOODROW WILSON TEACHING FELLOWSHIP TO RECRUIT STEM TEACHERS, CHANGE TEACHER PREPARATION *Gov. Deal Announces Program With Five Campuses, More Than a Dozen Districts*

ATLANTA, GA (March 3, 2014)— Governor Nathan Deal today announced that Georgia will be the first state in the South to join a growing national initiative that seeks to increase the supply of outstanding teachers in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields and to change how they are prepared to teach. Five Georgia institutions— Columbus State University, Georgia State University, Kennesaw State University, Mercer University and Piedmont College — have been selected as sites for the Woodrow Wilson Georgia Teaching Fellowship.

“STEM education plays a critical role in our state’s competitiveness and future economic prosperity,” Governor Deal said. “The most important thing we can do for our students in this field is ensure they have effective teachers. The Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowships will encourage more partnerships between institutions of higher education and our K-12 schools to improve educational opportunities for students in this critical area.”

Each of the five institutions will develop a model master’s-level teacher preparation program, offering Fellows a rigorous yearlong experience in local school classrooms. The process is similar to a physician’s hospital-based training in conjunction with a medical school. Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellows receive \$30,000 stipends to use during the master’s program. In exchange, they commit to teach in a high-need urban or rural school in Georgia for three years, with ongoing mentoring. Nearly two dozen Georgia school districts are being considered as partner sites.

“Study after study shows that teachers are the single most important in-school factor in improving student achievement,” said Arthur Levine, president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation. “Yet urban and rural schools consistently struggle to attract and retain strong math and science teachers — nationally, 30 to 40 percent of all teachers leave the profession during their first three years in the classroom, and more in high-need districts. So there’s a genuine need for these new teachers, and for innovative preparation that will help keep them in the classroom.”

The [Woodrow Wilson Foundation](#) will create and administer the program, with in-state coordination by the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education and support from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation. Current project funding is \$9.36 million.

“An investment in math, science and technology education is an investment in Georgia’s future,” said P. Russell Hardin, president of the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation. “We are proud to be able to help bring this program to Georgia and to strengthen the pipeline of excellent teachers for the Georgia students who need them the most.”

The university partners, selected in a statewide review by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, have 19 months to tailor programs that meet the fellowship’s standards for intensive clinical work and rigorous related coursework. The first Fellows will be selected in spring 2015, start their academic programs in fall 2015 and be ready to teach in fall 2016.

The participating universities will receive \$400,000 matching grants to develop their teacher preparation programs based on standards set by the foundation. For each of the program's three years, the participating Georgia colleges and universities will be able to enroll 12 fellows, totaling 180 fellows over that three-year period. Given the state's shortage of secondary-level STEM teachers, the foundation is looking for additional partners and funders to expand the program. "If the WW Georgia Teaching Fellowship is able to expand to its eventual \$13.7 million target," Dr. Levine said, "it will produce enough Fellows to fill nearly all anticipated STEM vacancies in the participating districts."

National Movement in STEM Teaching

The Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship will contribute to the University System of Georgia's initiative to produce 20,000 new teachers by 2020, as well as a national initiative to recruit and prepare 100,000 new STEM teachers across the country. The program received a White House endorsement in January 2010, and has quickly become a nationally known model.

The first state to launch the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship, in 2009, was Indiana, followed by Michigan, Ohio, and New Jersey. Across the four states, 23 colleges and universities have rethought their preparation and mentoring for new teachers, with over 350 Fellows currently teaching and nearly 150 more in preparation. A range of foundations and private funders, including Lilly Endowment Inc., the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and a consortium of Ohio and New Jersey foundations, as well as state and federal funds, have supported the Fellowship in its four initial states. The Georgia program brings the total commitment to the Fellowship to nearly \$90 million.

Dr. Levine said that at least four more states have been in discussion with the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation about creating their own Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowships. The Foundation has also launched in two states a similar program for preparing school and district leaders.

About the Woodrow Wilson Foundation

Founded in 1945, the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation (www.woodrow.org) identifies and develops leaders to meet the nation's most critical challenges.

About the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education

The coordinating partner for the Woodrow Wilson Georgia Teaching Fellowship is the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education. Founded in 1992 by the Georgia Chamber of Commerce and the Georgia Economic Developers Association, the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education consists of business, education, community and government leaders who share a vision of education excellence. Working to be Georgia's foremost change agent in education, the independent non-profit, non-partisan organization takes lead roles in efforts to shape policy and reform education.