Dorothy Lemelson creates STEM master’s cohort for local teachers

Experienced elementary and middle school teachers will have the opportunity to earn master’s degrees in education with an emphasis in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), thanks to the generosity of loyal University friend Dorothy Lemelson.

The Lemelson Elementary STEM master’s cohort program allows 28 Washoe County School District teachers to complete their master’s degrees at the University’s College of Education. This gift covers the full cost of tuition for the duration of the two-year program, which began this summer with graduation in spring 2014. In addition to the Lemelson STEM cohort, the program will include a six-credit STEM Principals’ Academy for 15 Washoe County principals, with priority given to those who work at cohort members’ schools.

Although this is the first cohort focused on STEM, it is the 11th cohort that Lemelson has supported at the College of Education. Through the Lemelson Education and Assistance Program, LEAP, 195 Washoe County teachers have earned their advanced degrees in education at the University since 2000. To date, 166 of those teachers specialized in literacy education and 29 in math and science.

Lemelson’s strong legacy of support for science education and entrepreneurship in northern Nevada includes the Lemelson Young Inventors Challenge, the signature event of the annual Western Nevada Regional Science & Engineering Fair at Lawlor Events Center.

“If students lack a strong foundation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, they are less likely to pursue the courses necessary in high school to prepare them for these subjects in college,” says Christine Cheney, dean of the College of Education. “Through Dorothy Lemelson’s generosity, we are able to build a strong network of teachers across the school district who are enthusiastic, skilled and committed to ensuring STEM content is effectively taught to elementary students.”

—Roseann Keegan

To learn more about supporting the College of Education, please contact Mitch Klaich ’02, director of development, (775) 784-6914 or mklaich@unr.edu.