

The IUPUI School of Science attracts leading scholars from 27 states and 38 countries. Forbes magazine recently ranked IUPUI as eighth in quality for Midwest public universities.

IUPUI Receives \$2 Million to Expand State, National Science and Technology Talent Pool

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Release Date:

Sep 24 2010

A \$2 million grant from the National Science Foundation to Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis is targeted to boost the number of students graduating with bachelor's degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics by 10 percent.

The funding is designed to encourage more students, including those who begin their college education in a local community college, to embark on careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and to provide those students with the support needed to achieve this goal. With this award, IUPUI hopes to increase STEM degrees to an additional 782 undergraduates by 2015.

Retention and persistence to graduation are particularly challenging for STEM students at urban universities such as IUPUI that enroll a diverse blend of students, including first generation college students, full and part-time students, and older students, as well as a growing number of traditional students. Many begin their studies at a community college that may lack courses necessary to prepare for a STEM major.

"STEM students and students who initially trained in non-STEM fields but are considering a change in trajectory tend to hit roadblocks that those majoring in other disciplines may not encounter – often lacking adequate math training or other technical competencies. And they often don't get specialized career planning support targeted to those interested in STEM fields," said Jeffery X. Watt, Ph.D., principal investigator on the NSF grant. Watt is associate dean for student affairs and associate professor of mathematical sciences in the School of Science at IUPUI.