

Alfred University Gets Grants to Help Update Math Instruction

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Alfred, NY -- The Division of Mathematics and Computer Science at Alfred University has been awarded two National Science Foundation grants for the teaching of math. The first grant, for "computer enhanced mathematics instruction," totals \$25,429 over three years, said Dr. Stuart Boersma, assistant professor and co-director of the grant project along with Dr. Robert Williams, professor, and Dr. Addison Frey, associate professor. The Division has done some work toward integrating computer technology into math teaching, but until now, the work has been limited to hand-held graphing calculators, Boersma explained. For more extensive change in the curriculum, "our students must have access to desktop personal computers running mathematical software." The NSF money will help finance a computer lab for both in-class and after-class use in differential equations and statistics, Boersma said, adding that the computers will also allow students to work on real-world problems that are computationally intensive. The grant will go toward computers, software, etc., to set up a math computer lab in Myers Hall. The second grant, for a project called "Multicampus Science, Math, and Technology Reform," will distribute \$199,979 to seven campuses across New York. Alfred University's share is \$11,942. "This money will be used to develop interdisciplinary applications projects for many of our mathematics courses," said Boersma, who is co-director of the project along with professors from other schools. The two-year proposal was submitted by a Seven College Collaboration for Integrating Inquiry-Based Learning, Mathematics Modeling, and Technology into the Mathematics Curriculum. The other schools besides AU are SUNY Oswego, SUNY Farmingdale, SUNY Oneonta, SUNY Brockport, Adirondack Community College, and St. John Fisher College.