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**Delta State University launches Collaborative for Rural STEM Education program**

**CLEVELAND, Miss. —** Delta State University is proud to announce the launch of the Collaborative for Rural STEM Education (CRSE), a groundbreaking initiative designed to provide professional development and essential resources for STEM teachers in the Mississippi Delta. The CRSE program aims to enhance STEM education in rural areas by equipping teachers with the tools and training they need. The workshop was made possible by a US Congressional earmark supported by U.S. Sens. Cindy Hyde-Smith and Roger Wicker and is 100% grant funded with federal dollars via the U.S. Department of Education.

The program has 22 participating teachers from 12 districts in the Delta region. It began with an initial professional development session from June 17-20 and will continue with Saturday sessions and classroom visits throughout the 2024-2025 academic year. The program will culminate with a final professional development session in the summer of 2025.

Jessica Hardy, Project Director of the Collaborative for Rural STEM Education, expressed her enthusiasm for the program, saying, “I am so grateful to the United States Department of Education for funding a project that allows us to get valuable resources in the hands of these teachers who would not be able to acquire them otherwise. We have a great group of excited and engaged teachers in this program who are eager to get started using these materials and what they've learned in training with their students. I can't wait to see how they implement what they've learned with their students. The CRSE team is phenomenal, and this is only possible because of their hard work and expertise. I want to express tremendous gratitude to the team members: Dr. Ellen Green (Principal Investigator), Dr. Tanya McKinney (Faculty Instructor), Dr. Maria Weber (Faculty Instructor), Dr. Lee Dean (Faculty Instructor), Dr. Daphne Smith (Faculty Instructor), and Mrs. Kendra Whitehead (Administrative Assistant).”

The CRSE team tailored the training and supplies to meet the specific needs of each teacher, based on a thorough needs assessment. Teachers were organized into cohorts according to their disciplines, needs, and grade levels, ensuring that the support they received was as individualized as possible.

Latasha Gallian, a K-6 STEM teacher at Oakhurst Intermediate School in Clarksdale, shared her positive experience, saying, “This program has been amazing. It has given us materials we need that we have been lacking. STEM is often overlooked, and this program has given us everything we need to help our students master the things they need to learn.”

Miranda Hawkins, a science lab teacher at Bell Academy in Boyle, echoed this sentiment, “This has been the best workshop I have been to in 17 years of teaching, not only because they gave us so much, but they taught us to use it.”

Delta State University remains committed to improving STEM education and looks forward to the continued success of the Collaborative for Rural STEM Education program. For more information, please contact Jessica Hardy at (662) 846-4891 or [jnhardy@deltastate.edu](file:///mail%20to/%20%20jnhardy%40deltastate.edu).

Cutline: K-12 STEM teachers from around the Mississippi Delta were able to get hands-on training during the launch of the launch of the Collaborative for Rural STEM Education at Delta State University.

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**About Delta State University: Delta State University is a four-year public institution whose nearly 2,700 students come from most U.S. states and more than 35 countries. The university offers numerous unique programs, including the Delta Music Institute entertainment industry program and one of the premier commercial aviation programs in the world. Situated in the heart of the Mississippi Delta, Delta State offers top-notch academic programs in business, arts, sciences, nursing, education, and more. DSU Athletics has won 14 national championships, 70 conference championships, and 37 regional titles.**