

# Guilford College, Guilford Middle School Begin STEM Partnership

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North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation awarded a \$25,000 grant to Guilford College in partnership with Guilford County Schools to enhance STEM education for middle school students.

The grant will create the Guilford STEM Partnership Program in which Guilford College students will mentor students at Guilford Middle School on a weekly basis, as they progress from middle school into high school. The program is expected to begin in spring 2017. The college and middle school are located less than a mile apart in western Greensboro.

In addition, faculty members at Guilford College will provide guidance to the middle school students as they progress to high school and apply to colleges and universities in STEM fields, says Gail Webster, Associate Professor and Chair of Chemistry at Guilford College.

“The faculty and staff at the college and the middle school are excited to enter into this partnership to prepare the next generation of STEM professionals,” Gail says. “Guilford’s focus on innovative and inclusive pedagogy makes us uniquely qualified to increase and diversify access to the STEM education pipeline. Starting this partnership in middle school is essential since preparation for a STEM career begins before a student enters high school.”

Ara Serjoie, Guilford’s Vice President for Advancement, says, “We are very grateful that the NC GlaxoSmithKline Foundation is supporting this important community partnership, recognizing that Guilford College is uniquely qualified to provide much-needed STEM education to middle school students in our area.”

Webster and Melanie Lee-Brown, Professor of Biology and Director of Research and Creative Endeavors, will provide lab experiences for the middle school students and guide the college students as they work with the younger students.

“This cohort model of mentoring will be a high impact experience for the development of both the college student mentor and the middle school student protégé,” Melanie says.

The goal of the program is to create greater diversity in STEM majors and greater persistence through the STEM curriculum at Guilford College, as well as increased academic performance for both mentor and protégé.

The grant was awarded through the NC GlaxoSmithKline Foundation Ribbon of Hope program, through which nonprofit organizations receive one-time grants of \$25,000 for projects furthering science, health and education in their communities.

Guilford College, an independent liberal arts college, has been actively involved with Guilford County Schools, the public school system, for many years. The Early College at Guilford high school has been located on the college campus since 2002.

## **About the North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation**

The North Carolina GlaxoSmithKline Foundation is an independent self-funding 501(c)3 nonprofit organization supporting activities that help meet the educational and health needs of today's society and future generations. Since its creation in 1986, the foundation has granted \$71 million to support North Carolina projects and programs that emphasize the understanding and application of science, health and education at all academic and professional levels. Visit us at [NCGSKFoundation.org](http://NCGSKFoundation.org).

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