The Center for Science, Math and Technology Education (CSMTE), was established by the Board of Trustees in February 2005 with Dr. Sandra L. White, Professor of Biology, serving as its first Director. The Center is dedicated to supporting the formation of intellectual capital through: 1) the establishment of a programmatic umbrella under which many of the smaller existing science and math enhancement/enrichment programs at NCCU can function collaboratively to provide a unified focus on preparation of students in science and math; 2) the development of both innovative and comprehensive science and mathematics programs (K-16) designed to assure the production of competitive undergraduate students to pursue advanced studies and careers in math and science; 3) obtaining quantifiable data from the development and execution of said programs, such that NCCU will serve as a resource for paradigms to increase the number of competitive minority students pursuing and attaining careers in science and mathematics; and 4) faculty development initiatives for science and math teachers in the Durham Public Schools through partnering with community organizations and programs within our own university. As the Center’s role is to service and bring together all extramurally-funded programs relating to science and math education, it is positioned within the university in the office of Academic Affairs, University Programs.

The Center currently has 25 members who are principal investigators with extramurally-funded programs which support science and mathematic initiatives here at NCCU. These members, cumulatively, have been responsible for funding in excess of $12 M for the period the Center has been in existence. In alignment with its goal of developing innovative initiatives, the Center has been successful in the development of two programs (funded at the level of $1.2M), Students Making Another Science Success Story (SMASSS), funded by the Burroughs Wellcome Fund and American Honda Foundation and Fostering Undergraduate Research Through University Research and Education in Science (FUTURES), funded by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. SMASSS is a 3-year continuous, hands on, interactive science and math, enhancement program for 8-10th graders which consists of a 3 week summer camp and school year Saturday Academies. SMASSS is beginning its fourth year and second competitive round of funding. This has been a tremendously successfully program. In the first group of students that began the program in 2006, approximately 3% had participated in a science competition, and that was a science fair. When they graduated from our program in May 2009, greater than 75% had participated in one or more science competitions, such as the National Science Decathlon. Not only had they participated, they garnered first, second and third place ribbons and won their first team trophy, at the regional National Science Decathlon in February 2009.

We are extremely pleased that through our Fostering Undergraduates Through University Research and Education in the Sciences (FUTURES), we have the ability to extend our science and academic enhancement program, potentially, through the 2nd year of college. FUTURES focuses initially on 11th and 12th graders. However, those from the program who apply and are admitted to NCCU, will continue with a Summer Bridge Program as well as academic enhancement and support for their Freshman and Sophomore years. This program began June 2009 and we are elated that of the 36 participants in the FUTURES program 69% are from SMASSS. This is phenomenal and speaks volumes for our building a pipeline of our own for science and math recruits at NCCU. Of course, there are other programs, under the umbrella of the Center, into which we will guide our students once they have progressed through FUTURES. These programs are designed to reinforce and nurture their competitiveness in the sciences during their college years (e.g. MARC, NASA, BBRI Cancer Program and BRITE).

Prepared by Sandra L. White, Ph.D.
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