

“Building a Community of Women Geoscience Leaders”

a Proposal to the National Science Foundation for ADVANCE (PAID – rfp 05-584)

I. Project Description

A. Project Goals and Objectives

Our vision is to increase the retention of geoscience women in the academic pipeline and to create women geoscientist leaders by building a supportive geoscience community for women from a significant population center: the northeast U.S. This can serve as a model for other regions and other science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields.

Our goal is to build a community of women geoscience leaders through shared experiences to empower them with the skills needed to thrive in academia. We will transform department chairs and thereby significantly transform geoscience departments in a selected region so that all geoscientists feel welcome, supported, and productive.

Our program objective is to build a Geoscience Community through:

- 1) **Career Development Programs** to provide women with the skills they need to succeed in academia now. These include:
 - A) **1- day workshops on key skills** needed for academic success but rarely specifically addressed in doctoral programs, such as: strategic persuasion, having influence in your department and at your institution, and negotiation.
 - B) **5 -day writing retreats** for 1 or 2 weeks at a secluded location with professional writing guidance and shared feedback so that women leave with a paper or grant proposal ready for submission.
- 2) **Changing Department Climates** by providing geoscience department chairs with needed skills for assessment and improvement of their department’s climate through a series of three one-day workshops conducted by experienced facilitators.
- 3) **Keeping track of our success** through maintenance of a database of geoscientists in this region and across the nation and **publication of our results** on a website and in the literature.

Our project is intended to broaden the impact of ADVANCE Institutional Transformation (IT) efforts from those institutions that responded to a survey we conducted asking what they considered their “best practices” for increasing the numbers and retention of women in science, technology, mathematics and engineering (STEM) fields. Most of our respondents indicated that professional development workshops for women faculty and transformation of department chairs’ attitudes were effective means to these ends.

We intend to take these proven strategies and apply them to all geoscience departments in a selected region, the northeast U.S. There is a nearly complete sampling of types of institutions, from bachelor’s-granting through Research I institutions in this area, and we can reach women and department chairs at all of these. Notably lacking in the area are Historically Black and Under-represented institutions (HBCUs) that offer geoscience programs, but we hope to be able to expand our efforts to nearby New York (especially NYC where there is a large Hispanic population) and New Jersey (Elizabeth City State University is the only HBCU to offer a geology major) if our program proves successful.