

Marketing of Science Teachers and Induction (MOSTI)

The Marketing of Science Teachers and Induction (MOSTI) was a collaborative project that created and implemented a model marketing and induction program to increase the number of middle-school science teachers. MOSTI coupled a marketing strategy to attract potential career changes with year-long content-specific mentoring and science professional development (PD) to ease transition into the classroom. The Museum of Science and Industry (MOSI), with local and national visibility, led the marketing component, focusing on science professionals and college students enrolled in science and engineering programs. The University of South Florida (USF) Coalition for Science Literacy (CSL) provided faculty support, targeting strategies of effective science teaching, classroom management, and use of student data for planning. CSL also implemented an online community as an additional way to help new teachers teach, learn, communicate and collaborate electronically. The School District of Hillsborough County (SDHC) was the third, critical partner in this project.

A marketing specialist at MOSI marketed teaching as a viable career to current professionals in other careers and to postsecondary students in science and engineering courses at colleges/universities. The marketing was done through a standalone project website, presentations to university students in science classes, presentations to local organizations with members/employees who might be considering career changes, and with print, radio, and television advertisements. The marketing specialist also attended job fairs that would reach the target audience and conducted information sessions at local libraries and at the museum itself. The most effective marketing techniques were the post-secondary presentations, job fairs, and print ads. These activities resulted in contact with 898 candidates who expressed interest in teaching science.

The marketing specialist worked with interested candidates to review their qualifications, provided information about certification processes, and advised them on readiness to apply to teach in the district. MOSTI staff forwarded qualified candidates' contact and qualification information to the district teacher recruiter. Candidates who wanted to complete certification requirements through the university were referred to the correct person in the College of Education for additional information about the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) programs in science and/or mathematics.

Fifty-two teachers enrolled in the MOSTI program in three cohorts. They participated in the PD workshops, mentoring, and ongoing support activities. The PD workshops focused on first-year teacher "survival" concerns and challenges, and did so by putting the strategies, procedures, labs, and other resources into context for the new teachers. Workshops not only offered tried-and-true tips and activities, but were explicit in helping teachers understand why these methods worked so they could plan and create effective lessons in the future. The PD workshops were focused on the following topics: Classroom Management, Lesson Planning, Teaching Reading in the Content Area (Science), Teaching Evolution and Other Controversial Subjects in Science, Concept Mapping in Science, Hands-on Labs and Lab Safety, Informal Science Education Resources in the District.

The MOSTI program provided an experienced middle-school *science* teacher as a mentor for each participant. To maximize the availability of mentor time for teachers, the mentors were either retired master teachers or master teachers on leave. Mentors were trained and supported throughout the year. Science-specific mentors were the most critical element of the support for participating teachers.

The MOSTI program produced a *Guide to Marketing Mathematics and Science Teaching* and gave the materials to the teacher recruiter in each of Florida's 67 school districts. School district partners and others have used the information to plan programs that work more effectively from the beginning and met the needs of larger numbers of new career-change teachers.