

Recommendations

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Based on analyses of the data collected and a review of relevant literature, the Brandeis team suggested a number of ideas for the Faculty for the Future program, which are also applicable to other programs seeking to increase the number of women and under-represented minorities entering faculty careers in business, engineering and science:

- Work with the GE Fund's pre-college programs to better prepare K-12 students – particularly female and minority – in math and science knowledge.
- Intensify support at the junior faculty stage, a critical yet often neglected juncture in faculty development.
- Create structured networking opportunities for fellowship recipients and institutional grantees to share ideas and present academic work.
- Increase visibility and understanding of Faculty for the Future to facilitate networking and to attract a greater pool of potential participants and future faculty members.

What Are the GE Fund and the Center for Youth and Communities?

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The GE Fund, the philanthropic foundation of the General Electric Company, invests in improving educational quality and access and in strengthening community organizations in GE communities around the world. All told, GE, the GE Fund, and GE employees and retirees contributed nearly \$100 million to community and educational institutions last year.

Established in 1983, the Center for Youth and Communities at Brandeis University's Heller Graduate School is one of the nation's leading research, professional development, and policy organizations in the broad areas of youth, workforce, and community development.

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Faculty for the Future: Increasing the Diversity of Higher Education

The GE Fund Faculty for the Future Program



Brandeis University

Findings from an Independent Review by the Center for Youth and Communities, Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University

September, 2001



What is the Faculty for the Future Program?

What Is the Faculty for the Future Program?

In 1990, the GE Fund (the philanthropic foundation established by the General Electric Company) initiated the Faculty for the Future program, a \$20 million effort to increase the number of women and under-represented minorities in faculty positions in the fields of business, engineering and science.

The Faculty for the Future program made grants to nearly 40 higher education institutions. While schools had considerable freedom to create programs that would best meet the needs of their students, all included some combination of the following types of support:

- Undergraduate research and teaching opportunities
- Graduate fellowships to attract and support students as they enter the doctoral studies process
- Forgivable loans to assist graduate students in completing their doctoral work
- Faculty coupons for new PhDs to conduct research and organize labs once they have secured a faculty position.

What Did the Program Accomplish?

The program has had a dramatic impact on increasing the number of minorities and women in faculty positions in business, engineering and science. By the end of 2000, with the Fund's support, approximately 200 students had earned Ph.D. degrees and accepted faculty positions – nearly 5% of all new faculty members in these fields in the past five years.

Nearly 900 additional students are in the pipeline at institutions such as Syracuse, Texas A&M, Duke and Morehouse.

Key findings from a program review conducted in 2000 include:

Participating institutions indicated that Faculty for the Future funding was valuable.

- 93% said that FFF activities led or contributed to increased recruitment of women and minority students into the faculty career path.
- 74% said FFF was important or very important to their schools' strategic planning around minority recruitment.

Business and engineering programs show significant results.

- Business schools were found to be especially effective at producing faculty members, with 77% of business graduates students "out of the pipeline" entering faculty positions.
- 16.5% of engineering participants out of the pipeline have become faculty members, more than four times the national average of 3.6% for women and under-represented minorities.



The study also found that

- 93% of respondents cited mentors and campus environment as the main factors in attracting and retaining women and minorities.
- Graduate students typically had funding from multiple sources.
- Faculty members cited the desire to teach, the flexibility of academic jobs, and the ability to pursue research interests as the main motivations to pursue a Ph.D. and faculty career.

Why and How Was Faculty for the Future Reviewed?

In 2000, as part of the GE Fund's review of its higher education programs, it commissioned the Center for Youth and Communities at Brandeis University to conduct a review to determine Faculty for the Future's outcomes to date, and to develop insights to guide the Fund's new strategies. The assessment consisted of several complementary strategies to document the impacts of the Faculty for the Future program with respect to the field, including:

- Telephone surveys with institutions receiving Faculty for the Future grants
- Telephone surveys with a random sample of former Faculty for the Future students
- A review of the literature to determine the impacts and common strategies of comparable retention programs.