Project INVITE
Interdisciplinary Neurological Visual Impairment Teaching Experts: Training Professionals to Work with Children with Visual Impairments in Rural, Remote & High-Need Areas

Virginia Murray Sowell
Center for Research and Education in Sensory Disabilities

A U.S. Department of Education - Office of Special Education Programs Grant

General Information
The Project INVITE grant was created to recruit and train scholars from Texas, Montana, Wyoming and Idaho to become teachers of students with visual impairments (TSVI) or orientation and mobility (O&M) specialist with specialized expertise in neurological visual impairment.

The two Sensory impairment programs that a student can choose from to pursue in Project INVITE are:

- Master’s in Special Education with emphasis in Orientation and Mobility
- Master’s in Special Education with emphasis in Visual Impairment

*Students will also complete a seminar course in Neurological Visual Impairment (NVI) and other interdisciplinary activities throughout the program. Project INVITE is recruiting the second cohort of scholars for a 2.5-year training program at Texas Tech University.

Benefits (Grant funds will cover):
- all tuition and fees each semester,
- required textbooks and course materials,
- all travel expenses required for on-campus orientation, for 5-week O&M course in Lubbock, and other course-related weekends at TTU (travel is on a reimbursement basis)
- enrichment experiences such as conference expenses and specialized courses.

Cohort 2
 Begins summer of 2022 in June, end time is summer of 2024. Grant will support 2.5 years in the prospective program.

36 graduate hours required for MEd in TSVI program, 36 hours for MEd plus 1 course for O&M program.

Must commit to attendance at all on-campus events including: Orientation in April 2022, course weekends in summer 22, Fall 22, Spring 23 (VI only), and required 5 weeks at TTU Lubbock campus in summer 2023 for O&M scholars.

Contact Information:
Texas Tech University
College of Education
P.O. Box 41071
Lubbock, TX 79409
806-742-2320

O&M: Nora Griffin-Shirley, Ph.D.
n.griffin-shirley@ttu.edu
806-834-0225

TSVI: Rona Pogrund, Ph.D.
rona.pogrund@ttu.edu
512-206-9213

Requirements to apply:
1) All applicants must hold at least a bachelor’s degree.
2) For TSVI program, must have an initial teaching certification in general or special education from Texas, Wyoming, or Montana. For Idaho, VI applicants must have a Standard Instructional Certificate. Only bachelors required for O&M program.
3) Must have access to a working computer and high-speed internet for online courses.
4) Must commit to completing your program within the established timeline.
5) Must commit to working with children with visual impairments for at least two years for each year of scholarship funding received.
6) Must be a U.S. citizen.
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Shared Program Courses:
- EDSP 5390: NVI Course
- EDSP 5380: Programs & Services for Individuals with Visual Impairments
- EDSP 5383: Anatomy & Functions of the Visual System
- EDSP 5384: Basic Orientation & Mobility Skills
- EDSP 5389: Strategies for Students with Multiple Impairments
- EDSP 5307: Collaborative Problem Solving in Special Education
- EPSY 5379: Introduction to Educational Research
- EPSY Elective Course (3 hours): EPSY 5310, 5314, 5323, 5331 or 5332

O&M Certification Courses:
- EDSP 5386: Intermediate O&M Training for Individuals who are Blind/VI
- EDSP 5387: Advanced O&M Training for Individuals who are Blind/VI
- EDSP 5391: Intermediate Seminar in Orientation and Mobility
- EDSP 5392: Advanced Seminar in Orientation and Mobility
- EDSP 5093: Internship in Special Education - Orientation and Mobility

TSVI Certification Courses:
- EDSP 5300: Exceptional Children & Youth
- EDSP 5381: Instructional Strategies for Individuals with Visual Impairments
- EDSP 5382: Braille Code for Teaching Individuals with Visual Impairments
- EDSP 5093: Internship in Special Education - Visual Impairment

*36 hours for MEd in TSVI, 36 total hours for MEd in O&M plus 1 course.

State Contact Information:
Idaho: Jeanne-Marie Kopecky, jeanne-marie.kopecky@iesdb.org
Montana: Barbara Peterson, bpeterson@msdb.k12.mt.us
Texas: Mary Shore, shorem@tsbvi.edu
Wyoming: Laurel Henry, laurel.henry@wyo.gov

TTU Contact Information:
Texas Tech University
P.O. Box 41071
Lubbock, TX 79409
806-742-2320

O&M: Nora Griffin-Shirley, Ph.D.
n.griffin-shirley@ttu.edu (806-834-0225)

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## Project INVITE: Interdisciplinary Neurological Visual Impairment Teaching Experts
### Sequence of Courses, Cohort Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum I 2022</th>
<th>Sum II 2022</th>
<th>Fall 2022</th>
<th>Spring 2023</th>
<th>Sum I 2023</th>
<th>Sum II 2023</th>
<th>Fall 2023</th>
<th>Spring 2024</th>
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<tr>
<td>TSVI</td>
<td>EDSP 5384</td>
<td>EDSP 5380</td>
<td>EDSP 5383</td>
<td>EDSP 5381</td>
<td>EPSY Elective Course</td>
<td>EDSP 5387</td>
<td>EDSP 5389</td>
<td>EDSP 5093</td>
<td>EPSY 5379</td>
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<td>Basic Orientation and Mobility Skills &amp; EDSP 5300 Exceptional Children and Youth</td>
<td>Programs and Services for Individuals with Visual Impairments</td>
<td>Anatomy and Functions of the Visual System &amp; EDSP 5382 Braille Code for Teaching Individuals with Visual Impairments</td>
<td>Instructional Strategies for Individuals with Visual Impairments &amp; EDSP 5390 Seminar in NVI</td>
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<td>Strategies for Students with Multiple Disabilities and Visual Impairments or Deaf-Blindness &amp; EDSP 5093 Internship in Special Education Visual Impairment (1 hr)</td>
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<td>O&amp;M</td>
<td>EDSP 5384</td>
<td>EDSP 5380</td>
<td>EDSP 5383</td>
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<td>EPSY Elective Course</td>
<td>EDSP 5387</td>
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<td>EPSY 5379</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Basic Orientation and Mobility</td>
<td>Programs and Services for Individuals with Visual Impairments</td>
<td>Anatomy and Functions of the Visual System &amp; EDSP 5391 Intermediate Seminar in Orientation and Mobility</td>
<td>Advanced Seminar in Orientation and Mobility &amp; EDSP 5390 Seminar in NVI</td>
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<td>Intermediate Orientation and Mobility Training for Individuals who Are Blind/Visually Impaired &amp; EDSP 5387 Advanced Orientation and Mobility Training for Individuals who are Blind/Visually Impaired</td>
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**Credits:**
- TSVI: 36
- O&M: 39

**Note:** The courses are designed to provide comprehensive training in the areas of orientation and mobility, educational research, and collaboration in special education.
Scholarships are available for Project INVITE- Interdisciplinary Neurological Visual Impairment Teaching Experts: Training Professionals to Work with Children with Visual Impairments in Rural, Remote, and High Need Areas to complete a master’s degree with an emphasis in orientation and mobility or visual impairment as well as certification as an orientation and mobility (O&M) specialist or a teacher of students with visual impairments (TSVI). Project INVITE has a focus on working with students with neurological visual impairment (NVI). To apply, submit the following documents to the Project INVITE Collaborative Partner in your state, ____________, via mail to the address at the end of this application, postmarked by Friday, January 10, 2022. Scholarship recipients are expected to begin the program in the summer 2022 semester, starting on June 1, 2022, and completing in summer, 2024.

To be eligible for this scholarship for the TSVI program, you must be a general or special education teacher with current licensure/certification/endorsement in your state and be a U.S. citizen. To be eligible for this scholarship for the O&M program, you must have a bachelors’ degree and be a U.S. citizen. If you are selected as a scholarship recipient, upon completion of the program of studies, you will be eligible to be certified in your state in your specialization area. For orientation and mobility, you will be eligible for national O&M certification from the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP).
Biographical Data

1. Full Legal Name ____________________________________________________________
   (Last) (First) (Middle)

2. Gender   ____ Male   ____ Female

3. Social Security Number ______________________________________________________

4. Present Mailing Address:
   Address: ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   (City) (State) (Zip Code)
   Do not use after this date: (mm/dd/year) __________

   Permanent Address (If different from above):
   Address: ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   (City) (State) (Zip Code)

5. Email address(es): _________________________________________________________

6. Phone numbers: Daytime: ________________ Evening: ________________
   Cell: ___________________

7. Are you a citizen or permanent resident of the United States of America or a U.S.
   Territory?
   _____ YES   _____ NO
   If yes, which state is your legal residence? _____________________________

8. I am applying for: (only select 1 program)
   _____ Program of studies in Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TSVI)
   _____ Program of studies in Orientation and Mobility (O&M)
9. Which of the following best describes you?
   __ American Indian or Alaska Native
   __ Asian
   __ Black or African American
   __ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   __ White
   __ Other (please specify) ____________________________________________

Are you Hispanic or Latino? (Circle one) Yes / No

10. Check the degrees or certificates you currently hold (check all that apply):
    __ High School diploma or equivalency
    __ Associate Degree
    __ Bachelor’s Degree
    __ Master’s Degree in ____________________________________________
    __ Educational Specialist
    __ Doctoral Degree in ____________________________________________
    __ Post-doctoral degree
    __ State or professional credential/certificate
    __ State-issued endorsement
    __ Grantee-issued endorsement
    __ Other (please specify) __________________________________________

11. List the address and contact information for a relative or other person not living
    with you through which you can be contacted:

   Full Name: _______________________________________________________

   Address: _________________________________________________________

   City: __________________________ State: _________ Zip: ________________

   Phone: _______________________ Alt Phone: ________________________

   Fax: _________________________ Email: _____________________________
Academic Data

Please list below all undergraduate and graduate college/universities and/or professional schools you have attended, in chronological order. Attach an additional page if necessary.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
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Professional Data

Please list your teaching or other professional certifications, including where they were obtained and in which areas. Attach an additional page if necessary.

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<th>CERTIFICATION</th>
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Employment

Name of Current Employer: ______________________________________________________

Location: ________________________________________________________________

Job title: ________________________________________________________________

Average hours of work per week: ______
Additional Materials

1) Biographical essay and photo

Tell us about yourself, including your interests and work experience. Your essay should not exceed one page in length. Please double space and use 12-point font. Attach a recent photo of yourself.

2) Essay Question

Please respond to the questions below. Your response should be two to three typed pages in length (12-point font, double spaced). Use standard, professional, high-quality writing style.

What are your interests within the field of visual impairment or orientation and mobility? How do you envision using your education upon completion of your graduate program? How will your training help students or programs in your state or region? Are there any additional skills that you have that will help you as a teacher in your state or region (languages spoken, community leadership experience, etc.)?

3) Letters of Reference

Please submit two letters of reference; one letter must be from a supervisor either past or present. These references should attest to your professional abilities, leadership skills and perseverance, and explain why you should be selected to receive the Interdisciplinary Neurological Visual Impairment Teaching Experts scholarship.

4) Vita or Resume

Please include a copy of a current vita or resume showing educational and work experience.

5) Teaching Commitment Obligation

Please read and sign the Teaching Commitment Obligation form. The electronic version of this document may include a typed signature, but the mailed copy must include an original hand-written signature.
Teaching Commitment Obligation and Scholarship Requirements

I understand that if I am selected to receive a Project INVITE scholarship, I must:

1) teach on a fulltime basis in an approved, special education program for a minimum of two consecutive years for each year of scholarship received (see https://pdp.ed.gov/OSDP/Regulation/ProgramRegs2006 for information on federal service obligation)
2) begin the first school year of eligible fulltime teaching service in an EC-12 school program within twelve months from the date I receive my certification, and
3) provide employment verification to OSEP and to Dr. Rona Pogrund at Texas Tech University until my obligation is fulfilled.

I understand that failure to comply with the above will result in a requirement to repay any scholarship funds received.

I understand that withdrawing from the program prior to completion will require me to refund all monies spent on tuition, travel, books, and other expenses.

I understand that not completing the program by the planned completion date may require me to pay for my own expenses beyond the planned completion date.

I understand that if money has been paid up front for travel which I do not complete, I will be required to refund the program for those expenses. Expenses for unused airline tickets will not be reimbursed once used for class travel. Penalties for changing flights will not be reimbursed by the program.

I understand that signing below does not guarantee selection as a Project INVITE scholarship recipient.

__________________________________________________________________________________________

Print full legal name _______________________________ Signature ________________________________

____________________________

Date
Return completed application postmarked no later than January 10th, 2022 to your state representative:

(Contact individual for mailing address)

**Idaho:** Jeanne-Marie Kopecky  jeanne-marie.kopecky@iesdb.org

**Montana:** Barbara Peterson  bpeterson@msdb.mt.gov

**Texas:** Mary Shore  shorem@tsbvi.edu

**Wyoming:** Laurel Henry  laurel.henry@wyo.gov