

Duran awarded \$900,000 NSF/ITEST grant



Mesut Duran, associate professor of technology in the School of Education, has received a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) worth \$900,000 over the next three years to support a new program called Fostering Interest in Information Technology (FI³T). The FI³T project is part of a nationwide initiative supported by the NSF's Innovative Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST) program.

FI³T project is designed to provide opportunities for underrepresented and underserved high-school students to learn about, experience, and use information technology (IT) within the context of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and explore 21st century related education and career pathways.

The FI³T project will accomplish its goals and objectives through the creation of a “*Community of Designers*”—an environment in which high-school students, K-12 STEM teachers, undergraduate/graduate student assistants (U/GSAs), and STEM content area faculty and experts work together as a team.

FI³T will create four project-based design teams, one for each STEM area. Each team will have access to year-round, two-year IT/STEM enrichment experiences to create high-quality learning projects, strategies and curriculum models for use in after school, weekend, and summer settings through hands-on, inquiry-based activities with a strong emphasis on non-traditional approaches to learning and understanding.

The project participants will learn about environmental science, web-based applications (games, databases), robotics, and bioinformatics while gaining experience using GIS, GPS, STELLA, Visual Studio, IGRIP, and Minitab software systems. It's anticipated that such experiences will provide awareness of and insightful solutions to collaborative leading-edge IT developments at the college and high-school level while also directing students into 21st century IT careers.

The project partnership will include UM-D's School of Education, College of Arts, Sciences, and Letters, and College of Engineering and Computer Science, Detroit Public Schools, Oakland Schools, US Army's Tank Automotive Research Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC), Treeflow Technologies, Dassault Systèmes'/DELMIA Corporation, FANUC Robotics, Inc, Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute, Systems Analytics and Environmental Science and Advanced & Manufacturing Engineering Quality Departments of the Ford Motor Company, and 21st Century Digital Learning Environments.

Duran is working on the project with UM-Dearborn professors Margret Hoft, Brahim Medjahed, Elsayed Orady and Paul Zitzewitz.

Project Web site: <http://fit.umd.umich.edu/>

