



## FY 2020-2021: Innovative Water Infrastructure Workforce Development Grant Program

### **East Central University (ECU): “Educational Program on Awareness, Sustainability, and Service in Water/Wastewater” (EdPASS-H2O)**



#### INTRODUCTION

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) authorized the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to award grants to nonprofit professional or service organizations, nonprofit labor organizations, nonprofit community colleges, institutions of higher education, or other nonprofit training and educational institutions to (1) assist in the development and use of innovative activities relating to water workforce development and career opportunities in the drinking water and wastewater utility sector, and (2) expand public awareness about drinking water and wastewater utilities and to connect individuals to careers in the drinking water and wastewater utility sector.

A total of 10 organizations were recently selected by EPA to receive grant funding under this program. EPA has developed Fact Sheets on each of these projects that includes the language from the grant submission.

To learn more about the range of activities EPA is undertaking to support our Nation’s water workforce, please go to [Sustainable Water Infrastructure-Water Sector Workforce](#).



#### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

East Central University (ECU) will design and develop an innovative K through Grade 12 STEM education program that focuses on water and the water issues and industry. East Central University, ECU, in partnership with the University of Oklahoma (OU), and National Rural Water Association (NRWA) propose a new program entitled “Educational Program on Awareness, Sustainability, and Service in Water/Wastewater (EdPASS-H2O). EdPASS-H2O will include a K12 STEM-based curriculum framework that provides students the foundational knowledge and awareness of water/wastewater issues and related career opportunities/pathways. The project aims to focus, particularly on NRWA’s new secondary student Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate program, currently in the initial planning phase (Spring 2022).



#### MAJOR ACTIVITIES

The EdPASS-H2O Elementary program will be an introductory program that leads to the EDPASS-H2O-High School program. Ed-PASS-H2O-E will increase elementary student awareness of water science, water sources, how humans use water, how human activity affects the water supply, and the significant role the US water industry plays in ensuring access to clean water.



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### MAJOR ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

EdPASS-H2O-HS will continue this developmental awareness with students, but its main function will be to prepare, educate, and inform interested students of water industry career pathways, and particularly for entry into NRWA's Secondary Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate Program.

Secondary students who complete the EdPASS-H2O certificate program will have the knowledge and skills needed, upon graduation, to apply for the NRWA's 2-year Formal Apprenticeship Program, which will fully prepare them for a life-long career in the water industry.



### OUTCOMES

- ◇ Integration of EdPASS-H2O program into school districts across the state of Oklahoma, and the nation.
- ◇ Increased student awareness of water science, water/wastewater infrastructure, human-interaction effects on source water, and careers in the water/wastewater industry
- ◇ Increased number of students entering the EdPASS-H2O-HS program
- ◇ Students meeting or exceeding target student cumulative GPA goals for 1) all EdPASS-H2O-HS coursework and 2) all EdPASS-H2O-HS math coursework
- ◇ Students meeting or exceeding the minimum number of job shadowing hours
- ◇ Increased number of applicants from EdPASS-H2O to NRWA Apprenticeship Program



### PARTNERS

- ◇ University of Oklahoma
- ◇ East Central University
- ◇ National Rural Water Association



The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

