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Federal grant will fund local Chinese language instruction for both teachers and high school students (draft)

TROY – Troy University will host the 2nd year training of K-12 teachers in Chinese language this summer and additionally, Troy University will host the first year Chinese language summer camp for high school students, both thanks to grants sponsored by the National Security Agency (NSA).

The STARTALK program is part of the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI) to build the U.S. language capacity. It was implemented by President Bush in January of 2006. Four government agencies were involved in this initiative: Department of State, Education, Defense and the National Security Agency (NSA). STARTALK is the program funded by NSA and involves summer programs focused on teaching critical-need languages and training teachers of those languages. STARTALK programs are now offered in Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Hindi, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Swahili, Turkish, and Urdu. Troy University offers residential programs in Chinese.

The \$98,750.00 STARTALK teacher grant will enable the Confucius Institute and College of Education at Troy University to provide free intensive and residential training of 100 instructional hours July 8 – 22 on Troy Campus to 25 instructional supervisors, methods instructors and potential master teachers of Chinese language. Participants must hold an undergraduate degree and must be teaching in, or are seeking to teach in, a K-12 Mandarin Chinese program in Alabama or surrounding areas.

Another grant of \$99,680.00, also from NSA, will fund the new and first-year Troy-STARTALK student program. A total of 30 high school students will be recruited to participate in this residential summer camp for two weeks to learn Chinese language and culture.

“This second grant is a significant achievement and it provided a basis for the College of Education and the Confucius Institute to partner in helping K-12 programs in Alabama build capability for teaching Mandarin Chinese as Alabama seeks to build economic bridges to Chinese business opportunities.” said Dr. Earl Ingram, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

“Our goal of the program is to develop a cadre of teachers of Mandarin with the dispositions, knowledge and skills needed to create and support a new generation of highly effective world language educators,” said Dr. Iris Xu, director of STRATLTK student program.

Dr. Xu said the program would help develop a professional learning community that could support program participants as they began classroom instruction.

“This training program is designed to solve the problem of a shortage of qualified and professionally trained Chinese language teachers in the region,” she said.

STARTALK was launched in 2007 as a summer language program for K-12 students and teachers with the goal to advance the national capacity in critical languages.

More information please contact

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