

Stephen F. Austin State University

News

SFA professor launches STEM Education in the Future initiative with Association of Teacher Educators, NASA Education

February 6, 2018 - University Marketing Communications

NACOGDOCHES, Texas - As national president of the Association of Teacher Educators, Dr. Karen Embry-Jenlink, professor of doctoral studies in educational leadership at Stephen F. Austin State University, has appointed one of the first joint commissions between ATE and NASA Education titled STEM Education in the Future.

During each ATE president's term, he or she is tasked with leading a national initiative in education. Embry-Jenlink's commission will explore and frame issues related to STEM education. The joint commission will launch at this year's 98th ATE annual meeting, which will take place Feb. 16-20 in Las Vegas.

"STEM education is the future, and every educator needs to be prepared and understand how these disciplines can affect our society," Embry-Jenlink said.

The commission's goals align with this year's conference theme of reimagining educator preparation in a democracy.

"We have to think of the society we have in mind for our future and create education to cultivate that society," Embry-Jenlink said.

Through this commission, members hope to advocate for STEM education and work with legislators, professional associations, state agencies and industry to develop policy.

Scholarly topics to be explored in this effort include, among others, ways teacher education can promote equity of STEM education for all students, methods of collaboration between colleges to advance teacher preparedness, and ideas for integrating ATE into the national conversation to advocate for STEM education funding.

Dr. Leslie Huling, senior advisor of the LBJ Institute for STEM Education and Research, is chairing the commission and is the project director in the NASA STEM Educator Professional Development Collaborative.

"Recognizing that the future STEM workforce is only as strong as the education pipeline, we have formed a commission of talented individuals to focus on STEM education and the future," Huling said. "I am humbled and honored to chair this group, and I look forward to the fruits of our collaborations."

Huling stressed the importance of the central role teacher educators play in preparing educators who produce the next generation of scientists and engineers necessary to keep the U.S. in a global leadership position.

"Commission members will identify leverage points where we can focus our energies and resources to make a positive impact on the STEM preparation and professional development of educators," Huling said. "We want all students to develop the strong academic skills needed for success in whatever fields they choose to pursue, and we see teacher preparation and professional development as key components in bringing this vision to fruition."