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## Del. colleges will share U.S. environmental grant

Researchers will study air and water quality, ecosystems, industrial pollution

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NEWARK -- Four Delaware institutions of higher learning will share a \$15 million federal grant aimed at greater understanding of environmental issues.

The National Science Foundation's research grant will fund programs to study air and water quality, as well as coastal ecosystems, and for the cleanup of hazardous industrial sites.

The research will include questions of how particles are released and transported in the air, and how to measure the impact of pollutants in the environment.

"I see it as an opportunity to conduct basic research, take this research and apply it to solving problems," said Donald Sparks, principal investigator on the Delaware project, known as the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research.

The federal program helps states develop their own research initiatives at their local institutions. It will help the researchers work with government agencies, industry and nonprofit environmental groups.

At the University of Delaware, it will pay for four new faculty members and three postdoctorates, as well as funding research for 37 graduate students.

It will also pay for internships for 140 undergrads, and for hundreds of middle school field trips and science teacher workshops.

It will also pay for modern laboratory space and equipment at UD.

At Delaware State University, it will include the hiring of two new faculty members, and the creation of a center for biological and environmental research.

At Delaware Technical & Community College, it will fund faculty-student research teams.

And at Wesley College, it will provide funding for paid summer internships, and pay for students to continue their research during the year and travel to national meetings.

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