

Lees-McRae identified as Top College for Teacher Education

Written by Lees-McRae

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On Dec. 9, The College Database released its list of top colleges in the state for teacher education.

Titled "Top Colleges in North Carolina: Shaping the Next Generation," the list highlighted post-secondary institutions in the state that produced the most education graduates during the 2012 school year. Lees-McRae was ranked no. 26 out of 42 schools that made the list.

In an article released by The College Database, Doug Jones, founder, said, "Many colleges and universities have tremendous teacher education programs. But which ones are producing the most young educators today? We wanted to identify the colleges making the largest impact on our students."

According to The College Database, the following methodology was used to identify the top colleges: must be fully accredited, must be a 4-year college, must be public or private, must be a not-for-profit college, must be a U.S. college, must have a minimum of 10 graduates from education or teaching programs in 2012.

"What sets our program apart from others and allows us to develop such superior teachers is the personal attention from staff and faculty," said Robin Buchanan, chair of the Division of Education. "This, combined with the programmatic emphasis on the Reflective Teacher model,

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helps our students achieve their full potential and enter the field of education prepared and ready to have a positive impact on the children.”

This isn't the first time Lees-McRae's Teacher Education program has made headlines. Earlier in 2013, the College announced that graduates from the Elementary Education program boasted a 100% pass rate for the third consecutive year on Praxis II, a requirement to become licensed as a public school teacher in North Carolina. More than 400 Lees-McRae graduates are employed as educators in North Carolina, which is a testament to the strength of the program.

“Student teachers from Lees-McRae College are prepared for education in the 21st century,” said Kimberly Simmons, North Carolina Educator Evaluation Consultant, NCDPI. “I am so impressed with Lees-McRae's program. They are leading educator preparation with innovative strategies and a strong commitment to pushing forward in a time of educational change.”

The Teacher Education program has achieved the high standards required to maintain accreditation by both TEAC and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). Lees-McRae's program is one of four in the state of North Carolina that has chosen to participate in NC FALCON, North Carolina's Formative Assessment Learning Community's Online Network. This program supports the implementation of formative assessment in North Carolina classrooms and professional learning community where challenges and successes can be shared with expectations of positive collaboration.

Serving as the lead pilot university to embed this training in their education program, Lees-McRae students not only participate in the professional development series, but are trained in using specific strategies to determine student performance in their classroom, create unit curriculum plans that embed these strategies, and prepare to implement their plans during their student teaching.

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Lees-McRae also offers education programs through its extended campuses at Mayland Community College, Surry Community College and Western Piedmont Community College, which are ideal for non-traditional students in need of a flexible academic schedule. In 2013 alone, 11 alumni of the Elementary Education program at Surry Community College were named Teacher of the Year at their respective institutions and two alumni have received county-wide honors as well.

For more information about teacher education at Lees-McRae, please contact Robin Buchanan, chair of the Division of Education, at buchananr@lmc.edu or 828.898.8747.