

UT Science Education Outreach Program To Double Capacity, Aid Texas K-12 Teachers, With \$390,000 Toyota USA Grant

With the recent arrival of a highly competitive \$390,000 grant from the Toyota USA Foundation, the UT College of Education's Texas Regional Collaboratives for Excellence in Science Teaching will more than double their mentoring initiatives for K-12 science teachers statewide.

The award-winning Texas Collaboratives, recognized last year by both the Governor's Office and the Texas State Legislature for its transforming effect on the state economy, offers both professional development and individualized teacher mentoring to 20 regional collaboratives blanketing Texas.

"For the State of Texas economy to compete globally, we must have a good supply of talented scientists, engineers and mathematicians," said Manuel J. Justiz, dean of the UT College of Education. "It really all begins in elementary and secondary school classrooms; in order to produce a talented workforce, it's even more important to have gifted, talented science teachers at all levels of the K-12 pipeline."

The three-year grant will launch the Toyota USA--Regional Collaborative Partnership, joining more than 50 other national and state corporations, which now contribute funding and equipment to the Texas Regional Collaboratives (TRC).

After Texas teachers receive special science education training at TRC sessions, they are expected to return to their school districts, which number more than 1,000 in Texas, and each train an additional five to ten teachers.

Dr. Kamil Jbeily, the TRC director, who operates from the UT College of Education's Science Education Center--chaired by Dr. James Barufaldi-- often paraphrases Nobel-laureate physicist, Kenneth Wilson:

"Imagine that you want to climb a mountain. You have some new equipment, but you've never climbed a tree before. There are two ways to approach it...

"You can take a practice run with somebody who has lots of experience and the ability to share it--that's called mentoring. The other way is to be taken to the base of Mt. Everest, dropped off, and told to get to the top or quit," he says.

"If you don't make it, your enthusiasm disappears, and you seek ways to avoid similar challenges in the future."

More than one-third of all U.S. states now require new teachers to participate in some type of formal mentoring program to attack formidable attrition rates for newly trained teachers, which can approach more than 50 percent after five years.

"Competition in scientific endeavors is intense and global in nature," said Larry Faulkner, UT Austin President. "To remain competitive, it is essential that we in this country, and especially in Texas, start intriguing students at an early age so we can graduate more scientists and engineers."

"We are pleased to support this outstanding, innovative science education program that will provide

substantive professional development and mentoring for so many teachers during the next three years," said Yoshi Inaba, Toyota USA Foundation president.

"The Texas Regional Collaboratives is an excellent example that seeks to address the critical needs of today's students."

Toyota USA Foundation, a \$35 million charitable endowment created and funded by Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., supports innovative educational programs that serve kindergarten through 12th grade classroom education, particularly emphasizing science and mathematics.

The TRC, which also receives funding from the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Department of Education Eisenhower Program, the Texas Education Agency, Shell, Exxon-Mobil, Southwestern Bell, Casio, Holt Rineheart & Winston, Delta Education, Frey Scientific, and TexaServer, also includes other Texas colleges and universities, Education Service Centers, school districts and business corporations--each working collaboratively through cost-sharing and in-kind contributions.



FOUNDATION NEWS

Toyota USA Foundation Awards \$816,000 For Math And Science Initiatives

July 24, 2001 -- Torrance, CA -- The Toyota USA Foundation recently approved grants totaling \$816,000 to fund five education programs designed to enhance the teaching of K-12 math and science throughout the United States.

Recipients of the awards include the Mathcounts Foundation in Virginia; Ohio State University's Education Outreach Programs; Center for Science Literacy at Oklahoma State University; Science Education Center at the University of Texas at Austin, and Take Stock in Children in Florida.

"We're pleased to support these five outstanding organizations that seek to build innovative math and science education programs," said Yoshi Inaba, president of Toyota USA Foundation. "Each of these programs addresses critical needs for students."

Funding of \$76,000 will enable Mathcounts Foundation to produce and distribute the 2001-2002 school year edition of the Mathcounts School Handbook. Distributed free of charge to 35,000 middle schools nationwide, the handbook is the centerpiece of the Mathcounts program.

A grant of \$50,000 will allow the Ohio State University's Education Outreach Programs at Lima, to develop "E-Quest," a hands-on, integrated environmental education program. The inquiry-based program will be used in alternative education sites for at-risk students.

The Center for Science Literacy at Oklahoma State University will receive \$200,000 over two years to fund the development of a professional development program for kindergarten through 10th grade teachers. The program, which will serve as a model for statewide systemic reform, will improve the teaching of science in under-funded, disadvantaged, inner-city schools in Tulsa.

The Science Education Center at the University of Texas at Austin will receive \$390,000 over a three-

year period to initiate the Toyota USA -- Regional Collaborative Partnership, a project that will provide sustained professional development and mentoring for 1,800 kindergarten through 12th grade science teachers. Designed to assist teachers in meeting the state's curricular standards, the Texas Regional Collaboratives program requires participants to complete 105 hours of continuing education and provide mentoring to other teachers.

A grant of \$100,000 to Take Stock in Children in Jacksonville, Florida, will provide seed funding to create a multi-year initiative that targets 100 high-potential low-income sixth graders. The mathematics, science, and technology program will recruit and train 100 mentors to meet with the students on a weekly basis.

The Toyota USA Foundation is a \$35 million charitable endowment created and funded by Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. It is dedicated to supporting innovative educational programs serving kindergarten through 12th grade in the United States -- with special emphasis on mathematics and science.

To request an application and guidelines, contact the Toyota USA Foundation at 19001 S. Western Ave., Torrance, Calif., 90509; call (310) 618-6766 or visit www.toyota.com/foundation.

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