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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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High school teachers gather for scientific research at the University of Florida

Program will focus on emerging human, animal and plant pathogens

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Florida science teachers are going back to school- this time, as students themselves. From June 14-26, about 25 to 30 high school teachers across the state will participate in a research-oriented professional development program focusing on emerging pathogens at the University of Florida Center for Precollegiate Education and Training, known as CPET.

“The Interdisciplinary Center for Ongoing Research/Education program gives UF a chance to partner with teachers to improve education and opportunities for teachers, students and UF faculty,” said Mary Jo Koroly, CPET director.

Teachers participating in the program will engage in hands-on research alongside university and professional researchers involved in the identification, understanding and management of emerging pathogens. They will look at a wide range of topics including HIV/AIDS, viral coat proteins, DNA analysis of plant viruses and the applications of industrial biotechnology.

“This program is a great way to apply the current scientific issues we’re dealing with into the education system,” said Julie Bokor, program administrator. “Not only do teachers learn the most recent research, their students benefit from it as well.”

Using what they learn, participants will create a proposal to use current research in their classrooms using a \$200 grant. In February, they will present their proposal results at the annual Junior Science, Engineering and Humanities Symposium. Teachers will also receive a student field trip to UF, Florida Atlantic University or the Fort Lauderdale Research and Education Center as well as three credits toward a graduate certificate in biotechnology education, further graduate studies and/or Florida teacher recertification.

“The ICORE program is a tremendous professional development opportunity for science teachers,” according to a past participant’s written comments. “Teachers can have difficulty staying current with the latest advances in science; this program provides the necessary hands-on experience to bring cutting-edge science to the classroom.”

There are still spots available, and applicants will be accepted until the program is full. Downloadable applications are available on the CPET Web site at

<http://www.cpet.ufl.edu/ICORE/Forms.html>.

The Interdisciplinary Center for Ongoing Research/Education program, which is funded by a grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, is designed to provide long-term collaborations, opportunities and resources to improve science education and help teachers engage in laboratory workshops and research.

For more information, please contact Julie Bokor at 352-392-2310, or e-mail her at Julie@cpet.ufl.edu. The UF Center for Precollegiate Education and Training can be found online at <http://www.cpet.ufl.edu>.

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The UF Center for Precollegiate Education and Training (UF-CPET) is a university-wide organization dedicated to fostering educational enrichment and forging research and Florida school partnerships by identifying, coordinating, extending or creating outreach programs that link secondary school teachers and students with UF in science, mathematics and technology.

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