

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Newsletter of the Office of Grants and Program Review

June 2003

UTC Begins New Mentoring and Tutoring Program

Staff Writer: Meredith Byrum, Graduate Assistant

Each year UTC faculty members create vital programs that offer positive growth and assistance opportunities to families in Hamilton County. This year is no exception, as Dr. Lynn Ourth begins a mentoring and tutoring services program which will benefit troubled children and families in Hamilton County. Dr. Ourth's program provides children with training to develop critical academic and social skills and offers support for families with children who have been referred to juvenile court or who are returning from state custody. Funded by a \$50,000 award from the Hamilton County Community Services Agency (HCCSA), Dr. Ourth's project exemplifies the remarkable benefits that university outreach activities can bring to the most vulnerable segments of the population.

In order to implement the program, Dr. Ourth has recruited and coordinated placements for upper level UTC psychology students who serve as mentors and tutors to troubled children across the county—those who have been referred to the juvenile courts or the Department of Children's Services, those currently in state custody, as well as those adjusting to the transition from state custody back to family life. So far, 22 UTC students have become mentors and are providing thrice weekly academic tutoring and social support for children between the ages of 12 and 18 throughout Hamilton

County.

This project has realized tremendous benefits for the children it serves. The first focus of the program is tutoring. Case managers refer youths who have dropped behind in academic subjects, most often math and English. Unlike many programs that serve only the most promising youths, Dr. Ourth's program targets those who are most in need of services: the typical participant is between two and four years behind their appropriate grade level. The tutor's first goal is to bring the student up to speed so that they are achieving at the appropriate academic benchmark. This goal has been tremendously successful: in one case, a student has advanced four grade levels in math after only three months of individualized tutelage. This is a significant accomplishment, as is the average improvement level of one to two grade levels per semester.

In addition to the academic gains of program participants, Dr. Ourth says that youths have also made significant behavioral improvements. When they were failing academically, school personnel and case managers reported that participants were withdrawn and unresponsive to the school setting, but with the one-on-one attention of their mentors, the students have gained interpersonal skills and learned to develop personal relationships. One youth participant's teacher commented that the student had been difficult in class before beginning the program but now was one of her best-behaved students. When she asked the student why his behavior had changed, the boy named

his tutor and said that was why he had improved.

This is a testament to the skill and dedication of Dr. Ourth and his team of student mentors, skill and dedication that is critical in light of the population that the project serves. Youth participants often come from environments where they were ignored or neglected; in many instances the relationships formed between mentors and youth participants are the only meaningful relationships that these youths have ever had. Mentors model positive social interactions and relationships for their youth mentees and try to help them establish meaningful relationships within their own peer groups.

Clearly the services provided by Dr. Ourth and his UTC student team have already produced more than just numerical results. The students are growing both personally and academically, and in the few months since the program began, they are already on their way to brighter and happier futures. As far as the success of the program is concerned, Dr. Ourth credits the UTC student mentors. He says they are "at their best," and he has great respect for them and the job they are doing. The current funding will carry the program into mid-summer, and Dr. Ourth hopes that he will be able to renew the program in the future to help as many young students as possible.

GRANTS AND RESEARCH

April 1, 2003 — May 31, 2003

FUNDED GRANTS

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

BIOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

DR. SEAN RICHARDS, DR. KAREN ADSIT, PROFESSOR DAWN FORD

National Science Foundation	Integrated Inquiry-Based Field Investigations in Environmental Science	\$25,026
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CHEMISTRY

DR. GREG GRANT

American Chemical Society	Complexation Studies of Heavy Metal Ions by Crown Polythioethers and Related Macrocyclic Ligands	\$16,666
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National Science Foundation	RUI: Complexation Studies of Heavy Metal Ions by Crown Polythioethers and Related Macrocyclic Ligands	\$30,306
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SOCIOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY, AND GEOGRAPHY

DR. NICK HONERKAMP

Tusculum College	Archaeological Survey and Testing at Doak House Museum	\$1,000
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EDUCATION AND APPLIED PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

EXERCISE SCIENCE HEALTH AND LEISURE STUDIES

DR. GENE EZELL

TN Department of Education	HIV Prevention Education Program: Teacher Training	\$60,588
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TEACHER PREPARATION ACADEMY

DR. DEBORAH MCALLISTER

TN Space Grant Consortium	Integrating Space Science and Other Natural Science IMAX DVDs with K-12 Curriculum	\$4,657
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ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

DR. PHIL KAZEMERSKY

Tennessee Valley Authority	Student Research Support	\$12,000
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DR. ANDY NOVOBILSKI

BreathQuant Medical Systems	Application of Bayesian Networks to Pulmonary Embolism Data	\$2,000
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SUBMITTED GRANTS

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

CADEK CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

DR. PAUL SHURTZ

Allied Arts of Greater Chattanooga	ASTA String Project	\$7,000
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SOCIOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY, AND GEOGRAPHY

DR. SHELA VAN NESS, DR. OBI EBBE, DR. BARBARA MEDLEY

U.S. Department of Justice	Evaluation of Building Bridges: A Correctional Option Program for Ex-Offenders	\$217,307
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EDUCATION AND APPLIED PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

TEACHER PREPARATION ACADEMY

DR. BARBARA RAY

TN Department of Education	Early Childhood Special Education Institute	\$99,144
TN Department of Education	Special Education Teacher Institute	\$38,291

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY CAREER EDUCATION

MS. CYNTHIA WOOD

SE TN Workforce Investment Board and Youth Council	Youth Enrichment Services — In-School Youth	\$75,652
TN Commission on Children and Youth	Youth Investment and Prevention Project	\$29,176
TN Department of Finance	Leading Youth to Success	\$97,203

SCHOOL OF NURSING

DR. CHERRY GUINN

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	Continuing Education for Rural Public Health Nurses	\$30,000
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