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UNL science program receives grant

From Staff Reports

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has been awarded a \$325,000 grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute for "Wonderwise: Women in Science Learning Series."

Wonderwise is an inquiry-based multimedia learning tool composed of five educational science kits developed for fourth to sixth graders. Each kit provides a week-long science unit focusing on one prominent female scientist and one science topic. It also includes video field trips with hands-on, multi-disciplinary science activities.

The grant will be used to help teachers and expand science opportunities for young people. This is the second time the program has received a grant from the institute; the first was five years ago for \$500,000.

"We've been testing and working with teachers across the state for the

past five years," said Judy Diamond, assistant director for public programs at the Museum and director of the Wonderwise project. "With the new grant we'll launch an on-line version of the project, where we can train teachers over the satellite or on-line, as well as support a new kit which will focus on the prairie."

The kits are designed to integrate literature, science and math curriculums and bring women scientists into the classroom. Diamond said the kits will be distributed nationally by the end of the summer.

Current topics include:

- "Sea Otter Biologist," featuring Brenda Ballachey, project leader for the Sea Otter Oil Spill Studies Project for the National Biological Service;

- "Pollen Detective," with Margaret Bollick, curator of botany and associate professor at UNL;

- "Rainforest Ecologist," with

Janalee Paige Caldwell, who works with the ecology of tropical amphibians;

- "Parasite Sleuth," featuring Judy Sakanari, a parasitologist who studies the genetics of tiny worms called nematodes; and

- "African Plant Explorer," featuring African-American biological anthropologist Fatimah Jackson.

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute, the nation's largest philanthropic organization, awarded \$8 million in four-year grants to 45 museums and other institutions across the country. The Wonderwise program received the fourth-highest total. The awards were made from 239 proposals submitted by 590 institutions invited to participate in the competition. Recipients include 33 museums, eight botanical gardens, three zoos and one aquarium.

Engineering students, teachers at UNL

From Staff Reports

Twenty-four students and three teachers from Nebraska high schools have been awarded internships with the Nebraska Research Initiative Engineering Research Centers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The interns will spend July 20-25 with Engineering Research Centers researchers learning about lasers, computers, electronic materials, infrastructure, the environment and nontraditional manufacturing.

Each student intern receives a fel-

lowship that includes room and board in university residence halls and an honorarium of \$250. The teachers receive honorariums of \$750.

Activities planned for the interns include creating World Wide Web pages, conducting balloon tests of the atmosphere, creating a laser light show, sampling wetlands soils, studying engine emissions and creating laser-generated

manufacturing prototypes.

This is the fifth year the centers have offered the internships, which attracted 105 applicants this year. The six centers were created in 1988 with

funding from the state legislature's Nebraska Research Initiative program. Their goals are to conduct research applicable to state industry, accelerate the flow of technology from laboratories to users and increase economic development in Nebraska.

The teacher interns are Sara Hartzell of Hallam, a teacher at Wilber-Clatonia High School; Jon Mayo, who teaches at Omaha's Brownell-Talbot College Preparatory School; and Janette Payne of Kearney High School. The teachers will spend time in each of the centers.

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