

## APRIL-MAY 2009 NEWSLETTER SCIENCE AND MATH BY INQUIRY NEWS

### EVENTS

#### SUMMER REGISTRATION UPDATE

Registration for our **summer courses** is well underway. Many courses are full, but there are still seats available in the last session (June 29-July 1): “Atoms, Bonding and Reactions” and “Plants.” Check [www.sxi.sbc.edu](http://www.sxi.sbc.edu) for course descriptions, or contact [jgriffith@sbc.edu](mailto:jgriffith@sbc.edu) to register.

#### LEARN TO USE HANDS-ON, MINDS-ON, INQUIRY-BASED ACTIVITIES TO TEACH MATH AND SCIENCE!

We are accepting registrations for **EDUC 656: Inquiry Methods in Math and Science** August 8-9 (9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. each day, with a one-hour lunch break)

Teachers will learn to apply inquiry to lessons that support Virginia SOL content objectives in math and science, focusing on fundamental aspects of investigation such as variables, measurement, and data analysis.

#### What is required?

- \*Implement four inquiry-based lessons in your classroom, assess the success of your lesson, and write a paper on each lesson.
- \*Attend four Saturday class meetings during the academic year.
- \*Attend three Saturday workshops during the academic year.

#### What do you get?

- \*3 graduate-level credits through Sweet Briar College, **tuition-free**
- \***\$480 stipend** available for teachers that complete the course.
- \*Participating school systems may contribute **\$150** towards the purchase of supplies.
- \***Materials and supplies** available to implement hands-on activities in the classroom
- \*Advice and in-class assistance available from the Instructional Support Specialist to implement inquiry-based instruction in the classroom.
- \*Students that are engaged and excited about learning math and science!

#### What past participants are saying:

"Giving them (the students) the opportunity to create their own questions makes them an integral part of their own learning... when students are invested in a learning experience I will have fewer behavior problems and much greater achievement."

“The opportunity they had to discover congruency on their own made the learning more meaningful to them and thus resulted in a greater increase in scores...Students are not only more likely to remember something is they do it, but even more so if they decide how to do it.”

“I saw students sharing ideas and coming up with different ways to solve problems. The students were engaged and excited!”

\*\*\*\*\*

## **MAY IS NATIONAL ASTRONOMY MONTH**

**The Astronomical League** has ideas for creating your own events to celebrate astronomy:

<http://SkyTonight.com/astronomyday>

\*\*\*\*\*

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

### **The Virginia Association of Science Teachers (VAST)**

VAST annually funds awards and mini-grant programs. The Mini Grant Funds may be spent for supplies, equipment, printing, and other essential materials. This money is not intended for student travel (field trips) or for the personal remuneration of those who receive the grant.

Deadline for Mini-Grant Applications is June 1, 2009

Awardees do not need to be members of VAST, however, the Mini Grant requires that the project director be a VAST member.

Deadline for Submittal of Awards Applications—which recognize outstanding science teachers in Virginia--is September 1, 2009

The forms can also be accessed from the VAST web site:

<http://www.vast.org>

If you'd like help with your grant application, email [jgriffith@sbc.edu](mailto:jgriffith@sbc.edu)

### **Toshiba America Foundation**

Toshiba offers grants for projects designed by K-12 classroom teachers to improve the quality of science and math education. Grant requests of more than \$5,000 are reviewed twice a year  
Deadline August 1.

<http://www.toshiba.com/tafpub/jsp/home/default.jsp>

Got an idea for a grant? We can help you write the proposal. Contact project assistant Jessica Griffith at [jgriffith@sbc.edu](mailto:jgriffith@sbc.edu).

\*\*\*\*\*

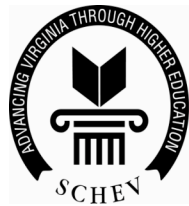
## FINAL THOUGHTS

What are the barriers to doing hands-on, inquiry-based activities in your classroom? Time! With SOL content demands, pacing guides, and maybe only 40 minutes to set-up, experiment, and clean-up, you may think it very near impossible to do activities in your classroom. But, did you know that you could cover several SOLs with one activity? You can even use a single science activity as a jumping off point to cover topics in math, reading, writing, and history. And by careful planning, you can stretch the set-up and experiment parts of an activity over more than one day. Contact Arlene for ideas on how to do fun things in your classroom and still manage time constraints.

And don't forget to fill out the ISS survey any time you work with Arlene. It's important for our ongoing funding from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=SvmTP\\_2b2t0QOxQ5ZRBU4CPg\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=SvmTP_2b2t0QOxQ5ZRBU4CPg_3d_3d)

For more information about our programs, go to [www.sxi.sbc.edu](http://www.sxi.sbc.edu)



State Council of  
Higher Education for Virginia