



### 2008 Virginia Association of Science Teachers Annual Professional Development Institute

Hampton Roads Convention Center  
November 13-15

URGENT! URGENT! URGENT! URGENT! URGENT!

The deadline for Presentation Proposal Submissions is **MAY 15, 2008**. We need your proposals now. The form for submission can be downloaded at [www.vast.org/content/File/presenterform082.pdf](http://www.vast.org/content/File/presenterform082.pdf). We are also piloting an online proposal submission form, which will be available by May 1st.

Please note - all Presenters must also register for the conference by September 15th, 2008, or your session will be withdrawn and your listing removed from the program.

The PDI theme this year is **Weaving a Tapestry for Science Learning**. Visit the [PDI website](#) for details on fieldtrips, general session speakers, hotels, and the individual strands.

#### REGISTRATION

There will be an online registration as of May 1st, 2008. Check back to the PDI site regularly at [www.vast.org/index.cfm/go/content.dspcontent/Page\\_Name/Conference.html](http://www.vast.org/index.cfm/go/content.dspcontent/Page_Name/Conference.html).

#### Journal of Virginia Science Education

The [Journal of Virginia Science Education, v2n2](#) is now available online and contains the following articles:

- **Collaboration Builds Solid Foundations for Inquiry-based Exploration in First Grade** authored by Kari Abbott, Kelly A. Kelly, and Susan Powell: Nature is the backdrop for learning for children at DJ Montague Elementary School in Williamsburg/James City County Schools.
- **Teacher Access to Mentors through Professional Scientist Organizations and the Virginia Science Resource Network (VSRN)** authored by David Anderson and Kathy Frame: This paper centers on efforts by the Virginia Section of the American Chemical Society (ACS), in conjunction with State and local educational organizations, to make mentors readily available to K-12 science teachers.
- **Wolftrap Elementary's Parents, Teachers, and Children: Partnering to Help Our World by Learning (HOWL)** authored by Elizabeth Burke: Parents at Wolftrap Elementary School in Vienna, Virginia, volunteer to bring an innovative environmental education program into classrooms.
- **Meeting Science Standards through Inquiry-Based Instruction: Building Scientific Literacy through Critical Thinking in Informal Learning Environments** authored by Nagla Fetouh: As states re-evaluate long lists of standards dominated by discussions about content depth versus breadth, teachers continue to struggle to creatively integrate standards into their curricula and to build a student-centered classroom.

Additionally, Greg Corder reviews five articles from the February 2008 issue of Phi Delta Kappan in his piece, Brain-based Education, and Michele Lombard reviews the The American Heritage Student Science Dictionary from Houghton Mifflin and Seeds of Science: Roots of Reading from Delta Education. Also included is November's call for submissions. As always, we welcome submissions outside of the theme, and encourage readers to submit article responses, especially 'Letters to the Editor'. For additional information, please contact Michele Lombard, [journal@vast.org](mailto:journal@vast.org). You could win a three-year VAST membership by simply reading a submission and emailing your reaction to [membership@vast.org](mailto:membership@vast.org). The deadline for this is September 15, 2008.

#### The Science Educator

The VAST newsletter, **The Science Educator**, is looking for articles to publish. Do you have a neat activity, a terrific resource, or an exciting science event to share with other teachers? If you would like to contribute, the next newsletter deadline is May 1. Contact the editor at [newsletter@vast.org](mailto:newsletter@vast.org).

Past issues of the newsletter are posted on the [newsletter web page](#).

## Committee Announcements

The Awards committee would like to encourage you to nominate a colleague for a **VAST Recognition award** . We are confident that you know at least one teacher that does an outstanding job and who should be recognized for their accomplishments. The awardees will receive a plaque and a \$150 reimbursement for the 2008 VAST PDI. The form is **online** and easy to complete. Nominate someone today.

The Mini-grant committee would like to encourage teachers to apply for a VAST **Mini-grant** to fund a project that will improve science instruction at your school. The form is **online** and easy to complete. Nominate someone today.

## In the Wild

### **Science, Evolution, and Creationism from the National Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Medicine, 3rd Edition available. The updated version**

- provides a comprehensive and up-to-date picture of the current scientific understanding of evolution and its importance in the science classroom.
- includes the many fascinating inquiries being pursued that put the science of evolution to work in preventing and treating human disease, developing new agricultural products, and fostering industrial innovations.
- presents the scientific and legal reasons for not teaching creationist ideas in public school science classes.
- shows that science and religion should be viewed as different ways of understanding the world rather than as frameworks that are in conflict with each other and that the evidence for evolution can be fully compatible with religious faith.

For a free PDF file of this book (as well as others) visit the Academy's evolution resources Web site: [nationalacademies.org/evolution](http://nationalacademies.org/evolution) .

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**A Second HHMI Evolution DVD** is now available (free), featuring a most engaging lecture by scientist and biology textbook author Ken Miller. He effectively discusses "intelligent design" and other religious concerns related to evolution and science. Lots of useful classroom material. Find a review and ordering information at [www.indiana.edu/~ensiweb/hhmi.evo2.html](http://www.indiana.edu/~ensiweb/hhmi.evo2.html)

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New programs on **earthOCEAN.tv** "Cetacean Investigation" - A series uncovering the science of whales, dolphins and porpoises around the world. All video programs are 10-20 minutes in duration and are freely distributed online in a number of formats with teacher's guides and fact sheets via internet including through iTunes. The latest program is entitled "Sanctuaries of the Sea" and can be found at [www.earthocean.tv/series/whalesmed\\_part5.html](http://www.earthocean.tv/series/whalesmed_part5.html) . Visit [www.earthocean.tv](http://www.earthocean.tv) for more information and to view previous documentaries.

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### **From The National Center for Case Study Teaching in Science (NCCSTS)**

A new case has been published: "My Dog is Broken! A Case Study in Cell Signaling" by Lynn Diener of the Natural Science Department at Edgewood College, Madison, WI. Cell signaling is one of the more difficult concepts for students to understand in their study of cell biology. To help students better understand the process of cell signaling--from reception to cellular response--a fairly simple signal pathway is used as an example in this case study in which students read a series of instant messages and emails between two friends trying to determine what is causing erectile dysfunction in a prize winning dog.  
Case: [www.sciencecases.org/cell\\_signal/cell\\_signal.asp](http://www.sciencecases.org/cell_signal/cell_signal.asp)

The Virginia Association of Science Teachers is affiliated with the National Association of Science Teachers. For more information about VAST, visit our web site at [www.vast.org](http://www.vast.org) .

To renew or sign-up for membership online, click [here](#) .

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