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STAR Institute Receives \$901,405 Grant for Teacher Science Education

ORANGE, Calif., Oct. 31, 2007 -- Chapman University has won funding for a new professional development project to help improve teaching in kindergarten through second grade in the core content areas of mathematics, science and English. The university was awarded a four-year grant of \$901,405 by the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) in a statewide competition.

The project, titled Science-Centered Literacy for K-2 Students: Project SMART, will hold summer academies where teachers not only receive training, but put it into action immediately with summer school students in the Anaheim City Elementary School District. About 90 teachers will be served over the life of the project, and will form Professional Learning Community teams to take the material back to their school sites, implement it in their classrooms, and share it with colleagues.

The states award is nearly 80% of the \$1.16 million dollar project directed by Chapman Universitys Science Teaching and Research (STAR) Institute. Roxanne Miller and Frank Frisch are the co-principal investigators of this project and also serve as co-directors of the newest institute at Chapman University. The STAR Institutes mission is to increase science literacy for pre-service teachers, working teachers and the community at large. The STAR Institute has sponsored a number of visits by nationally prominent scientists and writers to campus including James Trefil (physics, George Mason University) and Richard Louv (author of the *New York Times* bestseller *Last Child in the Woods*). The STAR Institute also works in the areas of health education, having received a grant from the Irvine Health Foundation to study bone health in Orange County.

This latest award from the state is part of the continuing efforts of the STAR Institute and Chapmans School of Education to improve science literacy in Orange County schoolchildren. This CPEC award doesn't just provide content to the teachers but also incorporates Family Science Nights, a bilingual newsletter, and other strategies for engaging parents in supporting their students learning. The project integrates science, literacy and math standards to improve student achievement for students in kindergarten through Grade 2.

Having received grants from the Edison Foundation and Washington Mutual, the STAR Institute offers a library of durable scientific equipment to elementary and middle schools. This allows schools to borrow sophisticated equipment that they could normally not afford. All loans of equipment are free of charge and come with instructions from a STAR Institute librarian on how to make intellectual connections for the students not just in science, but across the disciplines of math, art, history.

For more information about the STAR Institute and its outreach programs, please contact Roxanne Miller, Ed.D. or Frank Frisch, Ph.D. at (714) 997-6667.