

Dear Science Faculty,

My name is Becky Martin and I have been hired as the Out of School Time (OST) Coordinator for the National Science Foundation (NSF) grant to create an Academy for Young Scientists – TRIAGE. I will be working with Rachel Reed, Jim Jadrich, Crystal Bruxvoort, and Ken Bergwerff throughout the planning and implementation of the grant.

I have been a science teacher in East Grand Rapids for the past ten years and I recently took a year family leave to spend more time with my young children. I am thrilled to act as coordinator for this fantastic science project. I am also very excited to meet and work with you on this extraordinary journey. Students will surely depart the program more excited and knowledgeable about science.

Rachel Reed has perhaps spoken with you about the opportunity to participate in this project as a “satellite” team with your Calvin students. The middle school students will be exposed to science experiences and professionals throughout the calendar year program. They will be attending Calvin one day a week after school during the academic year and 2 weeks engaged in a Student Research Institute during the summer. The primary goals of these experiences are to engage students in authentic research and to excite students about science and a future career as a scientist. We are looking to reach this goal through exposing students to science experiences, experiments, and data collection with an emphasis on the facets of the research process. Our business partners will be supporting the program by providing company visits, professional shadows, career speakers, and/or directed data collection to help their cause.

It would be a fantastic experience for the middle school students to participate somehow with the science experiments / experiences that you are leading in your classroom. Since one of our primary goals is to help young scientists experience and understand the facets of the research process, we are hopeful that you will be interested in participating with us in this National Science Foundation (NSF) Academy for Young Scientists. The middle school students will be creating their own research questions and projects during the second half of their year commitment. Clearly, the benefits of working with you would be invaluable to our end goal.

Our hope is to provide support to you in terms of research implementation and data collection. If you have any ideas or interests, the possibilities are endless on our end.

Involvement can be as extensive or as minimal as you desire and can occur either during the academic year at the Bunker Interpretive Center or in your laboratories or for a one-or two-day activity during the summer in DeVries Hall or the Science Building. Possible scenarios may include:

*Any existing projects that you may have utilizing the Ecosystem Preserve or the Nature Trails would be ideal for academic-year data collection and exploration for our students and would, ideally, benefit you through provision of additional data.

*The middle school students could help you by collecting data for existing studies that you are conducting with your classroom or professionally.

*The middle school students could participate somehow in a project that would support your research or classroom research.

*The middle school students could shadow / assist Calvin students in the planning / ending stages of a research project.

My goal is to plan these authentic science experiences within the next couple of weeks so that we can best fit into your busy schedules and timelines for next semester. The middle school students will begin attending Calvin the week of January 29, 2007. I am currently working to plan the 2, two-week Student Research Institutes (SRI) for Middle School students. (A pilot SRI was run last summer for high school students, and we would like to follow that model.)

Thank you in advance for your consideration, excitement, and possible willingness to embark upon an opportunity for young people that will clearly influence, inspire, and engage future scientists.

I look forward to meeting you!

Best regards,

Becky Martin
TRIAGE, OST Coordinator
Calvin College
ram22@Calvin.edu
616-891-7646