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Texas Southern Brings GLOBE to Campus

TSU has partnered with Region 4 Education Service Center and the International GLOBE Headquarters Office to train local teachers in rigorous scientific protocols. GLOBE stands for The Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE). The GLOBE program is a NASA funded international Earth System Science and Education program, involving students, teachers, and scientists from 110 countries in collecting and analyzing atmospheric, hydrology, soil, and land cover data under strict scientific protocols. The data GLOBE students collect is organized in one of the largest scientific databases in existence, providing the only climate change inputs for a number of developing countries. While Texas students perform at the lowest levels in Earth sciences, GLOBE has demonstrated increased student learning in these subjects.

TSU's Office of Research established a GLOBE Partnership in May 2005 with a goal of providing Earth and environmental science and education training to Houston area and East Texas K-12 teachers. Many of the initial schools to be served by TSU GLOBE Partnership are predominately African American, where student performance in math and science are relatively low on standardized tests. Teachers in targeted schools are called upon to teach science and mathematics to a population with low expectations and low socioeconomic status. With the relocation of the GLOBE Partnership from the Office of Research to the College of Science and Technology, replacement of the training point of contact and engagement of additional faculty members, full implementation was delayed until spring 2009.

The Partnership's first training workshop took place February 25-27 on the TSU campus and at the Herman Park Lake. Twenty eight participants comprising k-8 teachers, college professors, STEM field graduate and undergraduate students were trained in Atmosphere/Climate and Hydrology protocols through classroom and field experiences. Ms. Omaha Williams, Science Specialist at Region 4 Education Service Center and Dr. Rusanne Low, Consultant, Consortium for Capacity Building, provided training in Atmosphere and Hydrology respectively. Dr. Mike Odell, University of Tyler also provided further training on Atmosphere and Hydrology protocols. Additionally, a GLOBE Parent Council training session was convened to introduce parents of GLOBE students to basic Earth System Science concepts. Plans to establish a GLOBE Parent Council at Cullen Middle School are underway. Parents, teachers and their students can work collaboratively on data collection projects.

The TSU GLOBE Partnership is led by Dr. Robert L. Ford as the Partnership Coordinator and Dr. Obot J. Ekwere as the Training Point-of-Contact. They have provided leadership to the project over the past 3 years. Additional information on GLOBE can be accessed at www.globe.gov.