

CORD summer camps target future scientists

By Lori Herring

The Center for Outreach Development (CORD) will offer a series of five-day camps for area middle-school children this summer. The Summer Science Camps will give children activity-based experiences designed to provide a deeper understanding of the content, tools and processes of science. "Students who become interested in science in high school and college track the beginning of their interest to middle school and earlier years," Director Michael Wyss (CORD) said. Five camps will be available each week June 20-July 29, except July 4-8. *Molecules and You*, a camp geared toward entering sixth-graders, will explore interesting molecular topics such as the acidity of foods, cleaning solutions and health and beauty products through hands-on laboratory experiments. *Over the Hills & Through the Vales*, geared toward entering seventh-graders, will offer students the chance to collect and analyze data about the forest and aquatic environments including plants, reptiles, amphibians and mammals. By the end of camp, children will be able to use their data to compare and contrast different animals and plants, as well as the processes of adaptation and the natural selection that allow them to survive. *Environmental Engineering and Your Health*, also for entering seventh-graders, will allow children to gain insight into the relationship between the environment and human health and will help them begin to understand environmental conditions that play an important role in human health. *Diving Into the Gene Pool*, geared toward students entering the eighth grade, will teach students to isolate DNA from different organisms, including the students themselves. They'll use modern molecular biology techniques and computer skills to conduct a forensic analysis of their own DNA "fingerprint." *PhysFactor*, also for entering eighth-graders, will put students' bodies and brains to the test: they'll become both scientist and subject in experiments. They'll discover the effect of exercise on their cardiovascular and pulmonary systems, for example. They'll design their own experiments, collect data, analyze the results, plot them out on a computer and more. Each of the summer camps features material based on the kinds of experiences children will have in the next academic year, Wyss said. "These camps will help raise kids up to a much higher level, scientifically. "I think this will be a really exciting time for UAB and hopefully generate a much more academically prepared group of children prepared for UAB in the future," Wyss said. Camps, which will be taught by CORD faculty, will take place at UAB, the McWane Center and Camp Winnataska. There will be a centralized drop-off and pick-up point at the CORD office in the Community Health Services Building on S. 19th Street. Camp lasts from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Parents should be prepared to pack lunches every day of camp but one. The fee is \$300. Some scholarships are available. The application deadline has been extended from April 8 to sometime around the end of the month. Call the CORD office (934-5171) for details or log on [<http://main.uab.edu/cord/show.asp?durki=10936>].