**Grant targets state’s shortage of math, science teachers**

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The program, called UKanTeach, gives students majoring in math or one of four areas of science the opportunity to earn a secondary school teacher certification without going through the School of Education. It will allow students to earn a science or math degree and a teaching license in four years.

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The Kansas program is patterned after a similar program at the University of Texas, which has produced about 70 math and science teachers each year.

Funds for the program were awarded Friday by the National Math and Science Initiative, one of 10 awards to universities to replicate the Texas program. The grant includes $1 million that will be awarded only if Kansas can obtain matching funds from private sources.

UKanTeach has been endorsed by the Kansas Board of Regents, which plans to ask legislators for funds to support the program.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius, who attended the presentation Friday in Topeka, said the grant has implications for the future.

“Math and science education is key to Kansas’ ability to succeed in the global economy,” Sebelius said in a written statement. “UKanTeach is an innovative program that will produce the teachers our state needs to help our students thrive in these subjects.”

Janis Lariviére, wife of university Provost Richard Lariviére, is familiar with the program after the couple’s years at Texas. She said Kansas has historically exported teachers and that the shortage problem has emerged in the past decade.

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The overall retention rate for teachers is less than 50 percent after five years, said Joe Heppert, chairman of the University of Kansas chemistry department and a co-director of the UKanTeach program. Interest in the Kansas program is growing because students can test the waters before committing to completing all the required course.

“Everyone involved has been a little overwhelmed by the number of interested students,” he said.

Participation is limited to math and science students, but Heppert said it could be expanded to include foreign language students in the future.

One of the first participants, Larry Hollingsworth, is using the program to move from the corporate world to the classroom. He will graduate in two years as a teacher with a degree in biology.
KU Awards $26 Million In Scholarship Support

Lawrence: More than 5,400 students at the University of Kansas will receive about $26 million in privately funded scholarship support during the 2007-08 academic year. This is a 10.6 percent increase from the 2006-07 school year, in which KU students received $24.3 million in scholarship support.

This year’s recipients represent 101 of the 105 counties in Kansas, 44 other states and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and 50 other countries.

So far, 7,603 scholarships have been awarded for the current academic year. Many students receive more than one scholarship. KU divides many scholarship awards between the fall and spring semesters, and there are some students who receive scholarship support for the summer term as well.

Virtually all scholarships, awards and fellowships awarded by KU come from private contributions to KU Endowment.

“Donors understand that without financial support, some deserving students would not be able to attend KU,” said Dale Seuferling, president of KU Endowment. “KU students are benefiting from the financial support provided recently and many generations ago by loyal alumni and friends.”

Though KU Endowment raises support for scholarships and other student aid, KU determines the distribution of available support. The figure fluctuates each year based on several factors, such as the number of students who apply for and receive them, the investment performance of endowed scholarship funds and new gifts for scholarships.

Scholarship funds are managed by KU Endowment, the independent, nonprofit organization serving as the official fundraising and fund-management organization for KU. Founded in 1891, KU Endowment is the first foundation of its kind at a U.S.

(Continued on Page 3.)
KU AWARDS $26 MILLION

(Continued from Page 1.)

...public university.

Clyde students receiving KU 2007 scholarships are: Karlie Rose Brown, Freshman, daughter of Kenton and Linda Brown, Robert and Nancy Wahl Scholarship; Sherlynn A. Cailleux, Sophomore, daughter of Kerry and Gilda Cailleux, Frank G. Crowell Scholarship; and Jamie Lynn George, Sophomore, daughter of Michael and Barbara George, Dane G. Hansen Foundation.
Preparing our students

As the Kansas economy becomes increasingly global and highly competitive, we must prepare the children of Kansas with the training they need for the economy of the future.

Key to Kansas’ ability to succeed in the new technology-driven marketplace will be workers who excel in math, science, technology and engineering; and right now, our students are underperforming compared to their peers around the world. Encouraging more students to focus on these fields and continue their education in math and science will help to ensure that we have the workforce for a prosperous future.

Quality teachers are essential to the success of our students; however, Kansas faces a shortage of math and science teachers. The Kansas State Department of Education recently reported that next year Kansas schools are likely to have over 680 vacancies for math and science teachers, but only 228 new math and science teachers are expected to graduate from Kansas schools.

Teachers have always had significant impact on the lives of their students, but now more so than ever, teachers dictate the future success of our economy as well.

Given the importance of these educators, it is essential the state produce not just more math and science teachers, but more effective math and science teachers. We can do this by encouraging math and science majors to enter the teaching profession and by supporting the development of highly qualified teachers in math and science fields.

A new program at the University of Kansas will accomplish those goals. UKanTeach is an innovative new program that allows students to earn degrees in math or science as well as a teaching license.

The program, a collaboration between the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the School of Education, aims to double the number of math and science teachers graduating from KU each year, resulting in an additional 50 new teachers in Kansas classrooms.

Last week the University of Kansas was one of 12 universities nationwide to receive a National Math and Science Initiative grant. The $2.4 million grant funded by the ExxonMobil Corp. will be used to fund the UKanTeach program. We know it works, because this program has been in place at the University of Texas and the results are encouraging.

We are pleased that KU was able to secure one of these competitive grants, and I am confident the UKanTeach program will produce more of the teachers our state needs to help our students thrive in the subjects of math and science. With programs like this and a continued focus on math and science, success in the classroom will no doubt extend to economic success in the future.

Kathleen Sebelius is governor of Kansas.
KU Students Awarded Scholarships

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Students from Washington County include:

66943 WS Greenleaf Sofia Margaret Hanke daughter of Bruce and Lucy Hanke Nursing BSN Junior Gilbert E. Johnston Memorial Scholarship Washington High School Washington

66943 WS Greenleaf Sofia Margaret Hanke daughter of Bruce and Lucy Hanke Nursing BSN Junior Medical Center Intercampus Scholarships Washington High School Washington

66945 WS Hanover Ashley Anne Doebele daughter of Rick and Becky Doebele Pre-Nursing Junior FAREL R. LOBAUGH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP Hanover School Hanover

66953 WS Linn Ashley Nicole Helms daughter of Robert and Kim Helms Pre-Nursing Freshman FAREL R. LOBAUGH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP Linn High School Linn

66958 WS Morrowville Kristin Lee Grover daughter of Jim and Linda Grover Chemistry BBA Junior FAREL R. LOBAUGH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP North Central High School Morrowville
Fire Victim's Mother Starts Scholarship

LAWRENCE (AP) -- The mother of a University of Kansas student who died in a 2005 apartment fire will begin awarding a scholarship in her daughter's memory next fall.

Nicole Bingham was one of three residents killed in a fire at the Boardwalk Apartment complex in Lawrence on Oct. 7, 2005.

In the past two years, the Nicole Bingham Memorial Scholarship Fund has grown to $30,000, and the first scholarship to be awarded for the fall 2008 semester.

To qualify for the need-based scholarship, undergraduate students should be history majors and have a grade-point average no higher than 3.5. The interest and grades reflect Nicole's, said her mother Nancy Bingham.

Nancy Bingham said she hopes the fund will keep her daughter's memory alive.

"That's what I hope this scholarship will do, and that the people who receive it will have that same passion for learning and history that Nicole had," she said.
Grant Aims To Reduce Shortage Of Math, Science Teachers

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Participation is limited to math and science students, but Heppert said it could be expanded to include foreign language students in the future.

One of the first participants, Larry Hollingsworth, is using the program to move from the corporate world to the classroom. He will graduate in two years as a teacher with a degree in biology. He's spending this semester at a Lawrence elementary school teaching math and science.

"I have had plenty of experiencing teaching in the past, but I've picked up a lot of new information through this program," he said. "This program has really added to my teaching skills."
TOPEKA (HNS) — Garden City Rep. Larry Powell sent a letter to newspapers this week touting the benefits that carbon dioxide from coal-fired power plants would have on crops in western Kansas.

The Republican lawmaker wrote the letter in protest of state Health and Environment Secretary Rod Bremby's recent rejection of a permit for a coal-fired power plant near Powell's district.

Powell also questions the science behind the now-common reports that the planet is warming because of an atmospheric overload of carbon dioxide, primarily from coal-burning power plants and automobiles.

"One of the really good things about CO2 is that plants perform better under stress (drought, etc.) with increased levels of CO2," Powell wrote.

Johannes Feddema, a professor in the University of Kansas' Department of Geography, said the letter overlooks the broader issue of global warming.

"The largest point to me is that picking and choosing what's 'good' and what's 'bad' misses the point that any great rate of change in our climate or atmospheric chemistry is going to be a challenge for our large human population that is entirely dependent on mass production of food and goods," Feddema said.

Higher carbon dioxide levels may have some fertilizing effects on crops, he said, but that wouldn't make much of a difference if drought, for example, were occurring.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which includes a wide array of researchers including some Kansas scientists, has created models of future climate amid global warming. The models show potential long-term drought in water-short parts of Kansas and other western states.

Powell said Thursday that he dismisses the panel's findings and doesn't believe man-made climate change is occurring.

"A consensus of scientists is not scientific proof. If it's actually true, they'd all agree with that."

Powell said citations in his letter to newspapers this week came from a book written by brothers Keith and Craig Idso.

According to the Union of Concerned Scientists in Washington, D.C., the Idso brothers have done work in the past for Western Fuels Association.

The association, which actively promotes skepticism of global warming research, is a cooperative of coal-fired utilities that includes Hays-based Sunflower Electric Corp., which seeks to build the two plants in Finney County.

Sunflower's Chief Executive Officer Earl Watkins is a Western Fuels board member.

"I got the book in the mail and I went through it, and it had things I'd not heard before," Powell said.

The book, "Forecasting World Food Supplies: The Impact of Rising Atmospheric CO2 Concentrations," concludes that carbon dioxide should boost agricultural production by 50 percent over the next 50 years, he said.

In his letter, Powell said he'd been looking to learn just what effects more carbon dioxide would have on crops.

Joy Ward, an assistant professor of plant ecology at the University of Kansas, said it's admirable that Powell seeks answers on the topic.

Through her research of carbon dioxide and crops, she and other scientists find that global warming is causing significant change, some quite detrimental to agriculture.

By fumigating field sites with higher levels of carbon dioxide, they've learned that when conditions are good,
crop production improves. But carbon dioxide is also causing temperatures to rise, which is a problem for plant life.

“In the background is a very negative problem,” Ward said. “You have to separate the direct effects, which are positive, from the indirect effects.”

It’s causing weather extremes, she noted, more rainfall in some places and less in others, more severe hurricanes, tornadoes and droughts.

Plus, higher carbon dioxide levels might benefit some crops under good conditions, but not others, she said. So its positive effects aren’t universal.

Ward said she and colleagues who research carbon are obligated to fully inform Kansas policy makers.

“This is a massive area of research,” she said. “In the bigger picture, the increasing CO2 is causing plant changes that are not good in many ecosystems.”
Teacher retention summit airs some growing concerns

By SARAH KESSINGER
kessinger@dailynews.net

TOPEKA (HNS) — Many Kansas school districts must spend a growing share of their budgets sending recruiters outside the state and sometimes even outside the country to find new teachers, a panel of educators noted Friday.

Annual vacancies — in math, science, special education as well as other areas — call for a greater focus from leaders and better teacher pay, they said at a summit on the state’s expanding teacher shortage.

“They’re leaving for money, folks,” said Mike Lane, Emporia State University president. “That’s the single biggest reason.”

About 300 Kansas school administrators and state education officials met for the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Summit to assess what some are terming a crisis.

Lane suggested more recruiting begin in public schools. Students often judge whether they’d like to go into teaching as a profession by their classroom experiences.

“If we’re not doing the job there, there’s very little my faculty can do to recruit them into the field later,” he said.

University of Kansas Dean of Education Rick Ginsberg said the state’s schools lose most teachers in early career years and later in careers.

Payment is part of the issue, he said, as young people enter the profession but are lured away by higher-paying jobs. Working conditions, too, play a major role in retention.

As for long-term teachers, they can retire at a relatively young age, he said, and they often will once they’ve hit the maximum level on the salary schedule.

The state faces a major challenge in five years when 36 percent of its teacher workforce is due to reach retirement age.

“We’re going to have exacerbated problems and bigger crises than we ever imagined,” Ginsberg said.

He suggested mounting a comprehensive, well-researched approach to recruitment, retention, teacher certification issues and teacher preparation.

Solutions, he and others said, need to result in better pay, including consideration of pay based on performance quality; recruitment targeted at states with an oversupply of teachers — such as Michigan and Indiana; strengthening of programs that encourage high schools to channel students into local community colleges or other universities; and establishment of a statewide recruitment center.

“We also need to take a good look at the regulations we have and knock down any barriers to getting good quality people into the classroom,” Ginsberg said.

He cited a survey done at KU a few years ago in which some high-achieving students were asked why they didn’t plan to pursue a teaching degree.

Their reply: “Because we see what our teachers have to do.”

Susan Scherling, superintendent in Stanton County schools, said her far-southwest Kansas district struggles to recruit to such a remote area. But she thinks the $33,000 starting salary is competitive for the small district of 467 students.
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A University of Kansas law professor revisited concerns about how state Supreme Court justices are selected in Kansas this past week.

Stephen J. Ware argued that citizens would be better served if the state required high court justices to be confirmed by the state Senate before taking the bench.

The Federalist Society, a conservative legal group, also commissioned a poll that showed public support among Kansans for such a change.

Legislators have failed to amend the change into the Constitution the past two sessions.

Currently a nine-member nominating commission evaluates candidates for the court and selects three individuals for the governor to choose from. But Ware said that process gives too much power to attorneys, who are guaranteed five spots on the nominating panel.

However Linda S. Parks, a Wichita attorney and president of the Kansas Bar Association, said Ware's proposal would make the selection process even more political.

"He wants the politicians to control it instead of the people and I think that's absolutely the kind of system that Kansans don't want."