

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS**

P. O. Box 830688

Richardson, Texas 75083-0688

News ReleaseNews Contact: Steve McGregor, UTD, (972) 883-2293, smcgreg@utdallas.edu

100 Fifth Graders to Participate in UTD's Second Annual 'Kids in Chemistry' Event

Hands-On Experiments Make Science 'Come to Life' for Students

RICHARDSON, Texas (Jan. 3, 2005) – One hundred youngsters – the entire fifth grade class at Aldridge Elementary School in Richardson – will journey to the campus of The University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) this Friday, where they'll don lab coats and protective glasses and play scientist for a day. The event, the university's second annual "Kids in Chemistry" Day, is designed to expose the young students to a campus laboratory environment and stimulate their interest in the sciences.

The students, under the watchful eye of UTD science majors and professors, will perform their own experiments in university chemistry laboratories, as well as view a variety of entertaining demonstrations. And, because aspiring researchers can work up a powerful hunger, the youngsters will be treated to a pizza party, as well.

"The benefits of this activity to the fifth graders are numerous, but begin with the opportunity to see textbook science 'come to life' in their own hands," said Dr. John W. Sibert, assistant professor of chemistry and faculty advisor to UTD's Chemistry Student Association, sponsor of the event. "The program stimulates their natural curiosities and validates their innate interest in what's around them."

Among the hands-on laboratory experiments in which the kids will take part is the creation of a non-toxic material known as "slime," a demonstration of the differences between acids and bases and an introduction to chromatography. Large-group demonstrations by UTD faculty and students will be conducted in the university's Kusch Auditorium.

The fifth graders will be accompanied throughout the day by a bevy of UTD students, all of whom are science majors.

"My experience is that the college students who volunteer their efforts get as much out of the event as the fifth graders," Sibert said. "They learn through this program about the importance of science education in the community and the personal reward in being a part of the process."

Conceived by Sibert and enthusiastically supported by his students, the university's first "Kids in Chemistry" Day was held a year ago, when UTD hosted a group of students from Shepard Elementary in Plano.

The motivation for the outreach activity? To stir a passion for scientific inquiry in young minds, Sibert said. "I feel those of us who pursue a career in science should feel an obligation and seek out opportunities to be ambassadors for scientific learning and discovery," he said.

About UTD

The University of Texas at Dallas, located at the convergence of Richardson, Plano and Dallas in the heart of the complex of major multinational technology corporations known as the Telecom Corridor®, enrolls more than 14,000 students. The school's freshman class traditionally stands at the forefront of Texas state universities in terms of average SAT scores. The university offers a broad assortment of bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs. For additional information about UTD, please visit the university's web site at www.utdallas.edu.

[Other Press Releases and Announcements](#)

This page last updated: January 3, 2005