GeoFORCE Program to expand for summer event

GeoFORCE Texas is looking for 11th grade students willing to "jump in" to a four-day program aimed at introducing them to a variety of exciting career opportunities available in the geosciences.

According to GeoFORCE Texas program director Julie Spink, the Jump-In event will cover four days this summer from June 25-28.

"We know there are some top-notch juniors in Southwest Texas who are strong in math and science but haven't yet decided on a college major or career," Spink said. "All we want is the opportunity to show them some of the cool things geoscientists do in the real world."

Students currently in 11th grade who meet the following criteria are encouraged to apply: 1) maintain a "B" or better overall average and a "B" or better average in ALL math and science courses, 2) exhibit exceptional social conduct, 3) submit all parts of the application by the Friday, March 17, deadline. Approximately 30 students will be selected from an 11-county area of Southwest Texas. There is no cost to students who are selected into the program.

"All applicants will be considered," Spink said, "but we especially encourage minority and female students to apply."

In addition to learning about career opportunities, students selected will also be exposed to college life on the campus of the University of Texas at Austin and visit selected sponsor sites in the Houston area.

Applications are available from high school counselors or can be downloaded at http://www.jsg.utexas.edu/geoforce/apply/index.html

All students submitting an application will be notified of acceptance or non-acceptance by Monday, March 27.

Jump-In is the newest phase of the GeoFORCE Texas Program started last summer as a partnership between the University of Texas at Austin's Jackson School of Geosciences, Southwest Texas Junior College and various corporate sponsors.

Main focus of the program are a series of four-summer academies for budding math and science students beginning the summer following completion of the eighth grade.

This summer, last year's inaugural class of 40 students will visit the Grand Canyon and other geological sites across the western US.

A new class of eighth graders will be named later this month as participants in their first summer academy which will include classes at UT Austin and a trip to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) headquarters in Reston, VA, as well as various museums and national parks in the Washington, DC area.

GeoFORCE Texas also sponsors a Young Geoscientists class each summer featuring field trips to various geological sites in Uvalde County and the surrounding area.

Corporate sponsors of the program include ConocoPhillips, Schlumberger, Dominion, Shell, Halliburton, AT&T Foundation, Marathon and ExxonMobil.

For more information on GeoFORCE Texas visit the program web site at www.jsg.utexas.edu/geoforce or contact Southwest Texas Junior College public information officer Willie Edwards at (830) 591-7222.