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Students Selected for Math, Biology Summer Research Program

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – Seventeen undergraduates and two high school teachers from 17 different institutions across the United States will conduct research on disease modeling, climate change and other topics during this year's summer research program at the National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis (NIMBioS).

During the eight-week long Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) and Research Experiences for Veterinary Students (REV), participants live on campus at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UT), and work in teams with UT faculty. This year's program takes place June 7-July 30. Research topics focus at the interface of mathematics and biology and include two topics of interest to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, modeling the effects of climate change on ant foraging behavior in the park and predicting the park's biodiversity. The other research topics are modeling John's disease in cattle, the growth and development of plant pathogens, and the dynamics of cat and dog populations in the community.

Undergraduate majors in biology, math, and related fields were chosen for the program following a competitive application process. Three veterinary school students and two high school teachers were also chosen. The award includes a stipend, housing and some funding to support travel.

This year's REU and REV students are Samrachana Adhikari (Mount Holyoke College); Dubravka Bodiroga (Hood College); David Bulgar (Oral Roberts University); Ijeoma Chimezie (Tennessee State University); John Collins (Univ. of Tennessee, Knoxville); Crystal Drakes (Kansas State School of Veterinary Medicine); Kelly Geyer (Virginia Tech); Ashley Jackson (NC A&T); Reka Keleman (Iowa State); Evan Lancaster (Bearden High School, Knoxville, TN); Tyler Massero (SUNY Geneseo); Luong Nguyen (Mount Holyoke College); Ejobagom Ojogbo (Fisk Univ.); Steve Rekant (VA-MD Regional College of Veterinary Medicine); Janelle Scott (Kansas State School of Veterinary Medicine); Meredith Spence (NC State); Ngoc Thai (Truman State); Jillian Trask (Blackman High School, Murfreesboro, TN); and Guang Yang (Appalachian State).

For more information about Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU), go to <http://nimbios.org/education/reu2010>. For more information about the Research Experiences for Veterinary Students (REV), go to <http://nimbios.org/education/rev2010>. To read about the experiences of past participants, go to http://www.nimbios.org/press/Reu_Profiles.

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The National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis (NIMBioS) brings together researchers from around the world to collaborate across disciplinary boundaries to investigate solutions to basic and applied problems in the life sciences. NIMBioS is sponsored by the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture with additional support from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.