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Cypress, Snowden and Springdale Students Prepare for NASA Space Camp As a Result of a Rhodes Grant

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Cypress Middle, Snowden, and Springdale Elementary School science students are learning a NASA-sanctioned science curriculum thanks to the NASA Stars Program at Rhodes College. All of the participants will travel in November to the camp located at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Ala. Rhodes students also are benefiting from the program as they help science teachers at the schools implement the curriculum and prepare students for space camp.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for many of the students in our partnering schools and a marvelous experience for Rhodes students as well, particularly those interested in becoming science teachers," says Dr. Natalie Person, associate professor of psychology at Rhodes and principal investigator for the project. Rhodes students participating are Larkin Accinelli, Kelly Ann Coney, Sara Connaughton, Keturah Dunlap, Alesia Harris, Auna Hearne, Laura Johnson, Gayatri Patel, Lindsay Plunk, and Stepanie Wilson. Rhodes faculty working with the schools are professors Carol Ekstrom, Janet Panter and Marsha Walton.

Rhodes has received a \$1 million congressionally-directed grant to begin a local NASA Stars Program encouraging growth in the Memphis City Schools in the areas of math, science, and technology. The program enhances the existing Rhodes Learning Corridor that is a venture among Rhodes, neighborhood public schools, and nonprofit partners to improve science teaching and learning. So far 435 students and 16 science teachers from the Memphis City Schools are benefiting from the NASA Stars Program.

Prior to Rhodes receiving the grant, the NASA Stars Program partnered with rural schools in northern Alabama. Teachers who participate in the program receive extensive training in integrating the NASA-sanctioned science curriculum into their science lesson plans. Thanks to the Rhodes grant, the teachers at Cypress, Snowden, and Springdale attended a summer educators institute in Huntsville. Funds also will be used to provide transportation and accommodations for participants from the schools as well as the Rhodes participants to attend the space camp in November.

Those with more inquiries about the NASA Stars Program at Rhodes College can contact Dr. Suzanne Bonefas at 901-843-3739.



