Insect Investigations Professional Learning Workshop for Elementary Teachers (grades 3-5)

Towson University’s Center for STEM Excellence is excited to announce a 4-day professional learning workshop for elementary teachers of grades 3-5. The Insect Investigations: Using ‘bugs’ to engage students in the NGSS Science and Engineering Practices workshop will focus on how to use insects in your classroom to engage students in the Science and Engineering Practices that are an essential part of the new Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The workshop will be facilitated by Dr. Mary Stapleton, Director of Bioscience Education and Outreach at Towson University's Center for STEM Excellence and Dr. Faith Weeks, a professor of entomology and science education at Towson University.

Workshop goals include:
- increased knowledge about, and understanding of entomology and the role of insects in the environment
- increased understanding of how to handle and maintain live insects in the classroom
- increased knowledge about, and understanding of the Scientific and Engineering Practices used in NGSS
- increased ability to engage students in the Science and Engineering Practices by using insects in science lessons
- self-reflection and assessment of teaching and of student learning

Who can apply? This workshop is appropriate for any elementary teacher of grades 3-5 who is interested in incorporating insects into their classroom teaching and learning more about the NGSS Science and Engineering Practices.

What: The workshop will take place over 3 days in June, with a final follow-up meeting in October (see below for dates). Participants will work in a collaborative, hands-on, learner-centered environment to learn how to incorporate insects into their curriculum and actively engage their students in the Science and Engineering Practices that are at the core of the Next Generation Science Standards.

During the workshop, participants will engage in model lessons aligned with NGSS that focus on insects and explore how to handle a variety of live insects and maintain insect habitats in the classroom. Participants will be challenged to develop and implement a science lesson plan that includes entomology and is aligned with NGSS and report on the implementation during the Fall follow-up meeting. All participants will be provided with an insect ‘starter’ kit that includes live insects and the materials needed to keep them in the classroom.
Participants are expected to:
- Complete a pre- and post-workshop survey
- Participate in all 4-days of the workshop
- Create and implement a classroom lesson with insects that actively engages students in the Science and Engineering Practices. This will require some time outside of the workshop to complete.
- Share their implementation experience with colleagues during fall meeting

Where: Towson University Center for STEM Excellence located at 701 E. Pratt St., Baltimore, MD, 21202. Please note that the Center for STEM Excellence is located in the Inner Harbor of Baltimore, and not on Towson’s main campus. Parking will be provided.

When: Participants will be expected to attend all four days of the workshop:
- Tuesday, June 26, 8:00 am – 3:30 pm
- Wednesday, June 27, 8:00 am – 3:30 pm
- Thursday, June 28, 8:00 – 3:30 pm
- Saturday, October 27, 8:00 – 3:30 pm

Why: All participants who successfully complete the workshop will be eligible for 3 Continuing Professional Development Credits (CPD) from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Participants will learn more about implementing the new NGSS state science standards in their classroom, as well as learn how to effectively engage their students in science using insects. All participants will receive an insect 'starter kit' that will include live insects and the materials necessary to keep them in their classroom.

How:
- Fill out the application at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Insects_18_Application.
- Have your principal fill out the “Principal Support Letter” found online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Insects_18_Princ. Remember, it is your responsibility to forward the link to your principal. Contact Dr. Mary Stapleton (mkstapleton@towson.edu) at any time to confirm whether or not your principal has submitted their “Letter of Support”.

Please note that we will send a confirmation email for every application we receive. If you do not receive this confirmation email, you can assume we did not receive your application and you should re-submit.

Applicants will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis until all seats in the workshop are filled. Only complete applications (your application and principal support letter) will be considered. Contact Mary Stapleton at mkstapleton@towson.edu with any questions.