CREATE Health will provide a collaborative statewide effort for pipeline programs. CREATE Health will build a stronger healthcare workforce committed to rural Colorado. CREATE Health will develop a workforce with the necessary skills to succeed in rural Colorado. Look for CREATE Health in your community. Get active, join us, and help your community and Colorado. Look for CREATE Health in your community. GET active, JOIN us, and HELP your community and Colorado. Look for CREATE Health in your community.}

Look for the Aurora LIGHTS

The University of Colorado Denver (UCD) has moved its health sciences center from Denver to its new site, the Anschutz Medical Campus, at the former Fitzsimons military base in Aurora, Colorado. Colorado AHEC and Central AHEC have been actively building partnerships in their new community. The Colorado and Central AHECs, along with the Aurora Public Schools, are excited to announce a new collaboration called Aurora LIGHTS (Leading the way in Health Sciences). The Aurora LIGHTS Career Program is a new partnership designed to help minority and disadvantaged students succeed in science, enroll in pre-med and health sciences school programs and become health science professionals. Aurora LIGHTS is engaging a range of partners with expertise and resources to help students achieve this goal; in addition to AHEC and Aurora Public Schools, these include UCD, Community College of Aurora and the Metropolitan Community Provider Network (Aurora’s local community health network). This collaboration will support educationally and economically disadvantaged students to enter a pipeline program extending from kindergarten through the health professional schools at the UCD, with a focus on education, recruitment and retention in the health sciences. Central AHEC will be a lead partner in expanding ongoing programs and developing new programs, such as an expansion of the Summer Academy into year-long activities with Aurora Public Schools. Our partners are making innovations within

Colorado AHEC Launches New Healthcare Pipeline Programs

CREATE Health and Aurora LIGHTS

The final product of a healthcare provider who thrives in a rural medical practice requires years of development, education and work. From grade school through residency, excellent education must be coupled with rural experience, and a receptive and supportive rural community. The Colorado AHEC System is launching two new healthcare pipeline programs aimed at increasing the number of students entering healthcare careers. The goals are to: 1) improve the basic educational building blocks, and 2) attract more qualified students into health careers. The Colorado Rural Education And Training Enterprise for Health (CREATE Health) is a program that improves, enhances, and supports education and rural health experiences. Aurora LIGHTS will provide pipeline programs for students in urban and educationally disadvantaged Aurora (see article on page 12). CREATE Health is a comprehensive program for improving the health of rural Colorado by increasing the supply of rural physicians and other health care providers. CREATE Health will work closely with numerous other organizations that are already doing work around health professions education and recruitment. The goal is not to reinvent the wheel, but to serve as the hub where good ideas can spread across the state and small organizations can find new ideas, support, and long-term partnerships. Ultimately, CREATE Health hopes to take these pipeline programs to hundreds of schools throughout rural Colorado.

Health career education begins in grade school with exposure to health careers through programs such as The Great Hospital Adventure puppet program, or the Medical Academy of Science and Health (MASH) Camp, which give children the opportunity to explore what different types of health professionals do each day by participating in activities that highlight their job duties. Teachers, counselors and administrators have the opportunity to experience a variety of healthcare careers through the Teachers Exploring and Advocating Careers in Health (TEACH) program, and the Science Teacher Institute at the University of Colorado Denver Anschutz Medical Campus.
University of Colorado Preceptor Receives Prestigious Award

Larry Kipe, MD, FAAFP, a University of Colorado Denver (UCD) preceptor, has been awarded this year’s Distinguished Physician High Plains Walking Stick Award. Dr. Kipe is a Family Physician with added certification in geriatric medicine practicing in Craig. He graduated with a medical degree from Southwestern Medical School (Dallas) in 1981, and finished his residency in 1984 while stationed at U.S. Air Force Regional Hospital, Carswell Air Force Base, Fort Worth, Texas. Dr. Kipe teaches students from the University of Colorado in his rural group practice, and has practiced medicine in Wyoming, Colorado, and Turkey.

Founded in 1994 by the UCD Department of Family Medicine, the Walking Stick Award Honors community physicians with 20 or more years of service, an excellent record of teaching residents and medical students, and who have attained positive role recognition, both in the medical and local communities. Congratulations to Dr. Kipe!

From the Librarian’s Desk

by Clair Birkman, MLIS
Editor-in-Chief

In honor of the planned Colorado School of Public Health, I have chosen a public health-oriented resource for this issue’s From the Librarian’s Desk. Please take a look at HealthMap (http://www.healthmap.org/en/). This unique resource, developed by Google, is an interactive map that utilizes feeds from the World Health Organization and others to provide the latest updates on diseases and outbreaks in the different regions of the world. Click on the link to find up-to-date information about public health events worldwide.

“Team Up for Concussion Awareness” Traumatic Brain Injury Conference

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) occurs commonly yet often goes unrecognized and untreated. Shaken babies, athletes, victims of car and motorcycle accidents, soldiers, and the elderly who have fallen commonly receive TBIs. According to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control at the Centers for Disease Control, 1.4 million people sustain a TBI each year in the United States. Of those, approximately 50,000 die, 235,000 are hospitalized and 1.1 million are treated and released.

What are the best practices for diagnosing and treating TBIs? What does the public need to know? How do you assess student athletes on the field to determine if they can return to play? These questions and many more spurred a grassroots coalition of medical and public health professionals, school health personnel, coaches, trauma personnel and community members in Pueblo to begin working on the issue.

The coalition is working to identify the best tools for assessing head injuries on the field, and has worked with the local school district to insure that ambulances will be available at all football games. The coalition is also working with SECAHEC to offer a TBI conference called “Team Up for Concussion Awareness” focused on student athletes on July 25, 2008. Sponsors for the event include universities and medical centers throughout Colorado, along with public health agencies.

To register call SECAHEC at 719-544-7833 or toll free at 1-866-330-7100 by July 11, 2008.

Southeastern Colorado AHEC

Southern Colorado Clinical Scholar Coalition

From Alamosa to Lamar and Trinidad to Pueblo, nurse workforce shortages plague urban and rural communities across southern Colorado. Though there are eight separate nursing programs in the region offered by six different community colleges and universities, shortages continue to force facilities to staff utilizing expensive agency nurses or by providing overtime to their existing staff. While there are many bottlenecks for the nursing workforce, one prevalent problem in southern Colorado is the lack of trained clinical nursing faculty. To address this problem, nursing leaders from across the region have formed a coalition to build a clinical nurse scholar program in the region. The SECAHEC and SLVAHEC are working with colleges, universities and medical centers from throughout Colorado to facilitate work on this Clinical Nurse Scholar Program.

The first clinical nurse scholar training is planned for October 2008, and will be a three-day event held at Pueblo Community College (the pilot program will be filmed so that the presentations will be available for future teaching). The program will be offered several times per year in different locations to make it accessible for all communities. The program is modeled after a very successful Clinical Nurse Scholar Program that is offered in the Denver area and one that is offered at Mesa State College.

The Coalition’s next meeting will be on July 28, 2008 at Lathrop State Park Visitors Center. The meeting will run from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Contact either the SLVAHEC or SECAHEC if you are interested in attending.
The major educational element in the professional healthcare education programs are Rural Tracks. The Rural Health Track in the University of Colorado School of Medicine is a rigorous four-year longitudinal program that provides additional and directed education for a cohort of medical students committed to rural medical practice. The Rural Health Track integrates with the medical school curriculum to maximize exposure to and experience with rural healthcare.

The School of Dental Medicine is currently exploring ways to implement a rural track, and the Schools of Nursing and Public Health are exploring rural programs for their students. Many of these programs enjoy a multidisciplinary approach providing excellent experience in the team approach often found in rural communities.

In post graduate training and residency, the focus in education is on diagnosis, treatment, and overall management of patient health and illness. Because rural healthcare providers typically have a broad scope of practice, skill acquisition must include such things as endoscopy, obstetrics, advanced trauma, orthopedics. Time spent in a rural community is a valuable experience for family medicine residents. CREATE Health will work with the residencies to increase the number of residents completing rural programs, and encourage rural communities to work closely with residency training programs to recruit graduates. CREATE Health will collaborate with the numerous other organizations working on recruitment of health professionals to rural communities. A program we are currently exploring is the Recruitable Community Program (article coming in next edition of newsletter). Community Development is an essential component of long-term success for pipeline programs. Our goal is to help communities understand the importance of their role in healthcare provider pipeline programs and support programs in their schools that will help develop health care providers. CREATE Health will provide valuable services to our many collaborators: support for new programs, with a goal of taking many programs to scale throughout hundreds of rural schools; communication through an annual jamboree for participants; regular newsletters; and an active website. CREATE Health will provide evaluation of programs, feedback, and technical assistance. Tracking participants in all programs will allow for recruitment of students from one program to another. By evaluating reasons for non-participation, we will gain a better understanding of barriers to continuing a health professional educational program.

Target Colleges for CREATE Health

- Northwestern Community College
- Colorado Mountain College
- Trinidad State Junior College
- Otero Junior College
- Lamar Community College
- Morgan Community College
- Northeastern Junior College
- Adams State College
- Western State College
- Mesa State College
- Fort Lewis College

CREATE Health and Aurora LIGHTS (continued)
WCAHEC Update -- From the Wild and Wooly West

From July 1, 2007 through end of May, 2008, WCAHEC placed 192 students in housing across the Western Slope. Thanks to Sarah Starwalt who has done and continues to do an excellent job!! She finds housing in some really tough-to-find areas such as the I70 Corridor where the gas boom has taken over. Thanks also to all of the Colorado AHEC Housing Coordinators who do such a fine job all the time.

WCAHEC and the Colorado AHEC System Office each sponsored the Women’s Cancer Symposium in Durango May 16 and 17. Roland Reynolds brought the Colposcopy Simulator to Durango for show-and-tell for physicians attending the Symposium. We also brought the Cardio Kiosk for use during the general public session on May 17. Over 140 attendees used the unit. Also, in collaboration with the Colorado Prevention Center, under the scope of the Cardiovascular Risk Reduction Program, we took our kiosks to 9 Health Fairs all over Western Colorado. Currently all five of our kiosks are back and placed in Grand Junction, Montrose and Glenwood Springs. We are truly looking forward to expanding this project over the next three years of the new grant cycle.

Students in our region have been very active: Ten students from across the WCAHEC region, plus three students from Atlanta, successfully completed an intense and intensive three-day AAPC Coding Workshop. Their AAPC exam is scheduled in Grand Junction in July. Six students completed an eight-session Medical Terminology Course, and students were heard to say they expected the knowledge gained to be very helpful on the job. Ten students took a Certified Nursing Assistant seven-week evening class. All 10 will take the license exam with the CCO Board of Nursing in June. We are sure they will be successful, and wish them every success in their new career.

In less than two weeks, the Western Colorado group of eleven students and one counselor (Roland Reynolds) will depart for the Student Health Career Institute in Denver. It is nice to see that many have already vacationed (and rested?) as we expect an intense, but exhilarating and educational experience.

Other WCAHEC projects include: organizing and marketing a West Nile ITV program (eight people attended and we had two local TV stations come to WCAHEC and run stories on this West Nile update); and collaborating with the Diabetes in Utah Alliance to present a one-month ITV telehealth lunch session (each month is a different session, and will be offered to community members as well as healthcare professionals).

Nationally known and acclaimed educator and speaker Dr. Laura Gasparis Vonfrolio will be presenting a two-day nursing seminar on Professional Acute Care Skills in mid-July. Please check out our website for more information, including how to register for the course. We overheard one lay person comment after her last seminar that even though she didn’t understand any of the nursing, she stayed for the whole class just to hear Dr. Vonfrolio. Outstanding!!

WCAHEC is participating in and sponsoring four middle school students at Mesa State College Mesa Academy Summer Health (MASH) Camp in June! This is an outstanding program developed by Dr. Kristy Reuss and her fine staff in the nursing and health sciences program.

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Centennial AHEC’s Nursing Awards for Caring

Centennial AHEC held its Twenty-Third Annual Nightingale and Centennial Nursing Awards for Excellence in Caring on March 21st at the Hilton Hotel in Fort Collins. Two hundred fourteen nurses, their families, health facility administrators, and supporters from around Northeast Colorado and Denver attended the gala affair. Craig Luzinski, RN, MSN, Vice President for Patient Care Services at Poudre Valley Hospital served as master of ceremonies as the thirty-three local nominees were presented and winners announced.

Sheryl L. Erthman, RN, FNP, a family nurse practitioner with Johnstown Family Physicians, was the region's Nightingale Award Finalist and an outstanding representative of northeastern Colorado at the statewide ceremony May 10th in Denver. Sheralyn Bradley, RN, Poudre Valley Hospital, Audrey Cook, RN, Medical Center of the Rockies, Karen Martin, RN, Medical Center of the Rockies, Sonja Mueller, RN, Sterling Regional Medical Center, and Carol Sednek, RN, VA Clinic and Medical Center, were the Centennial RN Award winners and Mary Cummings, LPN of Eben Ezer Lutheran Care Center, was the Centennial LPN Award winner. Centennial’s awards are unique in Colorado as not only registered nurses (RNs), but Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) are honored for their extraordinary commitment to the patients they serve.

CAHEC’s Dianne Stille, RN MSN, the Nightingale program coordinator, and her committee worked many long hours on the ceremony whose goal is to “promote the general image of the nurse, to honor those professionals personally and to recognize the contribution of these professionals to the community.” There are 19 members on the Nightingale Committee, representing acute, outpatient and long-term care facilities, health departments and schools of nursing, who struggled to identify the winners from so many excellent candidates. Banner Health System, North Colorado Medical Center, Medical Center of the Rockies, Poudre Valley Hospital and Sterling Regional Medical Center are generous contributors whose support is deeply appreciated.

The Poudre Valley Sax Quartet provided musical accompaniment and Kay Van Scocet of North Colorado Medical offered an invocation. In appreciation of Dianne’s steadfast devotion to the spirit of the awards as well as her detailed attention to making the evening as meaningful as possible and because she will be retiring later this year, the committee recognized her with accolades, flowers in a handmade vase and jewelry.

Congratulations to all the skilled and caring nurses of the Front Range and Eastern Plains!
The Colorado Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder & Prenatal Substance Abuse Prevention Outreach Project (COFAS-POP)

From left to right: Carmella Rodriguez, Technical Director / Media Coordinator; Dr. Pamela Gillen, Project Director; Sheila Nakarni, Project Coordinator

The Colorado Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder & Prenatal Substance Abuse Prevention Outreach Project (COFAS-POP) has been in existence since 1996, and is funded in part by the Department of Human Services Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division. The project is a collaborative effort involving health, education, social service and criminal justice agencies, women substance abuse treatment providers, and community groups. The program has a statewide focus using the Colorado AHEC System, within the University of Colorado Denver. The academic-community partnership of the AHEC program provides access to a statewide network of community agencies and groups. COFAS-POP uses this network to increase awareness at a statewide level of the prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders and other prenatal drug exposure. The project staff has expertise in FASD/ATOD (Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs) prevention, intervention, and treatment, as well as experience in universal, selective and indicated prevention programs, FASD curriculum development, alcohol coalition building and continuing education for health and human service providers, educators and the community.

The key strategies and goals for COFAS-POP include: 1) community-based processes to develop the capacity of local community groups/agencies in addressing FASD/ATOD issues in their areas, and to increase the knowledge and skills of individuals who work in high-risk populations in FASD/ATOD prevention and intervention; 2) information dissemination to increase overall awareness of the nature and scope of the FASD/ATOD problem and effective prevention strategies; 3) environment, to increase overall knowledge of effective FASD/ATOD policies and help change current attitudes at the community level.

COFAS-POP provides multi-discipline skill-building training sessions focusing on the effects of ATOD on fetal development and the child, and on prevention strategies and their effectiveness with different groups. Evaluation findings over the past five years show health care providers are changing their knowledge of how to screen women at risk for drinking, as well as a significant change in providers’ intent to change current practices as they relate to screening, identification and referral of substance-abusing women and/or children with prenatal alcohol exposure.

In addition to its work with health care providers, COFAS-POP uses media messages that try to prevent high-risk behaviors in women of childbearing age, such as “If you are pregnant don’t drink and if you drink don’t get pregnant,” “Rethink Your Drink,” “Your baby can’t say no to alcohol, but you can,” and “Prevent Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, the hangover that lasts a lifetime.” We also provide training statewide that include information on the effects of alcohol, tobacco and drug use on the developing fetus, tobacco use in the home and effects of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs while breastfeeding. We stress the need for women of childbearing age to always abstain from alcohol and drugs during pregnancy and to use alcohol below risk levels if not pregnant.

Meet the Neal Family

Eighteen months old, Zach would line up his metal earth movers on the back of the green and white plaid couch in the family room. At eight months old, Ashley was only eight pounds. At four years old, Zach only wanted to sleep in a tent and be surrounded by things. In first grade, Ashley could not count to one hundred. At ten years old, Disney World was not the happiest place on earth for Zach; in fact, the worst parents in the world took him there. By six years old, Ashley had been hospitalized three times and been to the emergency room dozens of times. All of these items raised questions and concerns, but always they were answered away by a healthcare provider as nothing to be alarmed by. By eleven and eight years old, Zach and Ashley had a diagnosis that answered all of Scott and Diane’s questions. Partial and Full Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Scott Neal and Diane Cushman Neal were shocked!

Scott and Diane returned to Colorado armed with a diagnosis and a mission to learn and do everything they could to benefit their children. Only it proved harder than expected. Each child needed a minimum of five specialists. After getting the education component in place, Diane began working on the providers. After fruitless efforts and hours of desperate pleas, Diane found Pam Gillen. It was then that Diane realized that although Colorado offered one of only a handful of unique Learning Difference Schools in the country, Denver Academy, Colorado did not truly have the trained providers her children required.

Frustrated and discouraged, Diane knew the only way to change this was to do something about it! Diane began volunteering her time and skills. Scott and Diane began finding funding opportunities. Each time a need presented itself; Diane tried to help find a way to help. With Scott’s encouragement, Diane organized the COFAS-POP group for the Colorado Women’s Expo. Diane worked tirelessly on obtaining posters, frames, and other decorations for the booth. Diane worked with Carmella and Pam creating literature and underwrote the expense. Scott and Diane worked with bars to have them save their wine corks and bottle caps to fill extra large baby bottles. Diane had Revive Day Spa donate products and an entire day at their spa, as well as dinner gift certificates to Lime and 975, and a gift certificate to Paperwires. More than 7,000 women came, 300 signed up for prizes, dozens requested speakers and more information, and over 150 mother/daughter pairs talked with us on Sunday alone.

Scott and Diane have now created an account through the CU Foundation in honor of their children. They plan on assisting the COFAS-POP project with the upcoming Collaborative Project, the re-creation of the website, speaking engagements, fundraising and other future projects. Diane continues to spread the word daily, whether she is on a flight and interviews the nurse sitting next to her about what she learned in nursing school, or talking to a waitress at dinner about the importance of “no amount of alcohol is considered safe during pregnancy.”

Meanwhile, Zach and Ashley have their good and bad days. Having the diagnosis has enabled the Neals to have greater patience and understanding. Zach and Ashley now have two parents that continue to educate, network, and search to create the best team for them. Diane’s dedication received the ultimate thank you at Mother’s Day from Zach when he listed the top ten great things about Mom and wrote that she spreads information for us and about us.” Scott and Diane feel that they are throwing a pebble into a large, vast body of water. They are excited to see their ripple spread and grow, knowing the potential of Colorado’s statewide projects outreach!

For more information, please contact Dr. Pamela Gillen at (303) 724-0327 or by email pamela.gillen@uchsc.edu.

COFAS-POP
http://www.uchsc.edu/ahec/fas
CU Denver Anschutz Medical Campus
Colorado AHEC System
MS-F433, PO Box 6508
Aurora, CO 80045
Phone: 1.888.724.3273 / Fax: 303.724.0891

The Neal Family

From left to right: Zach, Diane, Scott, Ashley

The Neal Family

From left to right: Scott Neal, Zach Cushman Neal, Pam Gillen

The Neal Family

From left to right: Carmella Rodriguez, Technical Director / Media Coordinator; Dr. Pamela Gillen, Project Director; Sheila Nakarni, Project Coordinator

The Colorado Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder & Prenatal Substance Abuse Prevention Outreach Project (COFAS-POP)
Central Colorado AHEC Health Careers Institute

The Health Care Institute for Educators, a unique program developed by the Central Colorado AHEC office, is designed to meet the need identified by school counselors, teachers and youth workforce specialists to increase awareness among these groups of emerging health and bioscience workforce needs and education in Colorado. This very successful one-day program was expanded to two days this year, and offered during the month of June at the request of counselors and teachers in locations distant from the metro regional area (to allow attendance during summer). The fifth annual Health Care Institute took place at the Anschutz Medical Campus, and offered participants hands-on experiences, speakers, panels, tours and an informal “resource fair” for individuals to explore the information from the models of career exploration and connections possible within their own communities. More than 50 participants took part in the 2008 Institute.

The purpose of this yearly program is to provide an education conference and six-month follow-up for rural and urban high school (including alternative) teachers, counselors, student leaders and youth workforce office specialists. The long-term objective of the program is to increase the number of rural and urban under-represented youth entering health and bioscience careers.

Program learning objectives are that participants will be able to:
1. discuss the current demand and top three careers with shortages in health care and bioscience workforce;
2. identify three key elements of the educational pathways and requirements to enter these high-growth careers;
3. reflect on the context of the emerging bioscience industry in Colorado at the Bioscience Park and the new companies housed there, as well as through the Bioscience Association of Colorado leadership;
4. identify two models to consider for their own youth to explore health career options in their own community; and
5. identify and access new resources for use in their community.

Jack Westfall, MD, Director of the Colorado AHEC System, supported efforts in 2007 to host a rural counselor/teacher institute through grant funds from the University of Colorado Denver and the Colorado Rural Health Center. However, the success of the Institute depends not only on the support of the Colorado AHEC System; it is the collaboration of multiple organizations that contributes to its success: Douglas County School District, University of Colorado Denver (UCD), the Center for Advancement of Professional Excellence (CAPE), Colorado AHEC System, Colorado Community College System, Community College of Aurora, Fitzsimmons Redevelopment Authority, Kelly Scientific Resources, Inc., Colorado Bioscience Association, Metro Wired Initiative, Medical Career Collaborative, Youth Workforce Council/Governor’s Summer Job Hunt, and the Central Colorado AHEC.

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Science Fair…Building a Place for Scientific Inquiry

The Denver Metro Regional Science and Engineering Fair (DMSEF) is in its 45th year supporting student participants who have excelled both in their own school fair in grades 6-12, our regional fair in February 2008 and at the Colorado State Science and Engineering Fair. Scholarships provided in this year offer students the unique opportunity to continue to develop their presentation skills in this next level of competition.

Central Colorado Area Health Education Center (AHEC) is pleased to assist the 501(c)3 community-based organization to support the efforts and work of the more than 300 students who participated in the 2008 regional activities (with 30 students qualifying to go to the state competition). The top 10% of students in the Junior division are nominated to participate in the national science competition in the Society for Science and the Public Middle School Program. The diverse professional group of volunteer judges selects the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place category winners and special awards. These place winners each receive a cash award, provided by government and private agencies, and professional societies. The success of each year’s fair is directly dependent upon the support of public and private organizations, corporations, government agencies, universities, school districts, teachers, parents and students. We also depend upon the efforts and coordination of more than 130 volunteers, including more than 80 judges. There are more than 20 organizations that provide representatives to judge exhibits, and many develop unique awards with both a message about their area of professional interest or focus in health, earth, space, environmental conservation or others for the students, parents and teachers. The 2008 group of student participants, teacher/mentors and parents worked very hard and delighted in their scientific inquiry and learning. We are always excited and proud of our two top Senior students who qualified for the trip to the International Fair and have a great opportunity to share with others from around the globe!

We invite you or your organization to affect and encourage the positive growth of the young people in this Metropolitan region. Become a contributor to the DMSEF with specialty judge representatives, awards and incentives such as cash, calculators, books, subscriptions, summer job opportunities/internships or scholarships.

Contact Kris Wenzel, Co-Director, 303-724-0359 or Dawn Costa, 303-724-0326 for further information about participation. Go to our website for photos of this year’s participants and lists of award winners: http://www2.uchsc.edu/sciencefair. We will be sending information out to our regional school district schools in late September as reminders to register for the February 25 and 26, 2009 DMSEF.

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