

The Adept2 Outreach Experience

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In recent years the requirements for outreach, education and/or extension elements in large, government-supported genomics/genetics grants have increased substantially. Granting agencies are keen to monitor progress and end-product results, and the bar for successful completion is constantly being raised. For the nearly completed "Allele Discovery for Economic Pine Traits 2" project (NSF - 0501763) a number of outreach activities focusing primarily on high school level teachers and students were undertaken. The centerpiece of the outreach effort was the creation of a "Careers in Forestry and Natural Resources" webpage (<http://www.forestrycareers.org>). This recruitment tool was designed to promote the many sub-disciplines of forestry and natural resource management, and encourage college bound students to attend one of the many Universities that offer degrees in these fields. The site popularity has grown to over 2,700 visitors per month in 2009. In 2008, a weeklong workshop for science teachers was delivered by project personnel at the DNA Learning Center at Clemson, in conjunction with Center staff. This workshop introduced lab, field and classroom lessons on genetics/genomics of forest and horticultural trees to HS teachers. The third leg of our outreach chair was the support and mentoring of a high school teacher to participate in the Kenan Fellow Program for Science at North Carolina State University. This two year program has resulted in the creation of a series of lesson plans on tree improvement, forest genetics and the application of molecular markers in forestry, and development of plans for a genetic "lab" with DNA handling capability. In addition, as with many projects, ADEPT2 staff continue to report results of their efforts through conferences, invited talks and peer-reviewed papers.

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