

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Wildcat Charter School
is a performing success

By Sara Chavarria

SPECIAL TO THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR

Keeping its promise to the community, the Wildcat Charter School continues to provide a supportive learning environment to underserved students, most of whom come from low-income families.

Under the leadership of the University of Arizona College of Education, the innovative K-8 school in the heart of Tucson features a ground-breaking curriculum, small classes, athletics, after-school activities and cultural development.

The Arizona Department of Education recognizes the school as Performing Plus.

As the College of Education's liaison to the school, I work with various colleges at the UA to bring the talents and abilities of UA students and faculty to Wildcat Charter School students.

As a result of our work, some wonderful programs have blossomed. Through the College of Education's Project SOAR, UA students learn how to mentor middle-school students.

The project now partners with the College of Science to prepare science mentors.

Working with Ekaterina Taralova, then a UA computer science undergraduate, and Kobus Barnard, a UA associate professor of computer science, I helped design and execute an annual computational science camp for middle-school students. The camp, run by computer science students, is funded by the National Science Foundation.

I also launched the College of

ABOUT THE EDUCATOR



Sara Chavarria is the director of outreach for the UA College of Education. She developed a summer institute for high school students and designed a mentor-hosting handbook for K-12 schools. She was a key member of the design team for UA for You (uaforyou.arizona.edu), a website that allows community members to easily locate all the outreach programs the UA offers. Her doctorate from the UA is in reading, language and culture.



SARA CHAVARRIA / UA COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
On the last day of computational science summer camp, students present their final 3-D research models to parents and scientists.

Education's rigorous Passport to High School Summer Institute.

Eighth-grade students spend half a day meeting and interviewing College of Science researchers, scientists and graduate students.

This helps the recently graduated eighth-graders plan their high school program to best prepare them for both college and their future careers.

EXPERIENCE SCIENCE

Wildcat Charter School: www.thewildcatschool.com

UA for You portal: uaforyou.arizona.edu

College of Education Outreach: coe.arizona.edu/community/outreach

UA COLLEGE OF SCIENCE OUTREACH



SHIPHERD REED/ UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Dunham Elementary students cheer after visiting Flandrau. More than 10,000 schoolchildren visit each year.

Life, the universe and everything

By Elliott Cheu

SPECIAL TO THE ARIZONA DAILY STAR

To encourage K-12 teachers and students to become more science-savvy, we combined the UA College of Science's informal, public activities with our formal K-12 education programs to create an integrated program of outreach.

We incorporated the incredible resources available at Biosphere 2, Flandrau, Tumamoc and Mt. Lemmon SkyCenter to create programs and activities that bring science to the classroom and across the community.

One such program aims to connect every undergraduate in the College of Science with K-12 students, providing mentoring and tutoring. A pilot version of this program includes sponsored trips to College of Science facilities such as Flandrau and Biosphere 2 — places where students engage in fun, educational activities to further understand the role of science in their lives. These trips expose students to our university campus, in the hope of inspiring them to consider college and get involved in science.

We are developing resources to strengthen our community of educators, especially K-12 teachers

ABOUT THE SCIENTIST



Elliott Cheu is a professor of physics and the associate dean in the UA College of Science. His research involves understanding the nature of dark matter and its role in the universe. One of his current roles is coordinating the outreach efforts of the College of Science.

EXPERIENCE SCIENCE

Biosphere 2

- Public tours, programs, admission costs: www.b2science.org
- Videos, podcasts, webcam: www.b2science.org/b2/inter-video.html

Tumamoc Hill

- Free lecture series, seating is limited and reservations required: www.tumamoc.org

Flandrau

- Programs, admission costs, Family Fun Nights, Laser lecture series: www.flandrau.org
- Science connections, resources for K-12 educators: www.flandrau.org/k12

Mt. Lemmon SkyCenter

- SkyNights, events, image gallery: skycenter.arizona.edu

and UA staff and faculty.

One such resource is a website that K-12 teachers can use to find UA researchers available for activities such as classroom visits and lab tours.

Another new resource, called Teacher Science Cafés, builds upon our successful Science Café program by initiating a series fo-

cused on K-12 outreach and teacher resources. At these cafés, scientists discuss their research and answer questions in a small-group situation, often at local restaurants. These events bring exciting content to the K-12 teaching community and strengthen connections between UA and K-12 educators.