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40 top high school students attend University of Montana institute

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MISSOULA --

Forty top science scholars from American high schools around the world are spending their summer in Western Montana studying ecology.

The University of Montana is conducting the National Science Foundation summer science training program in two sessions, covering June 12 through August 19.

Dr. Forrest D. Thomas II, UM associate professor of chemistry and program director, said the session is designed to give high caliber students, who have demonstrated ability and interest in the sciences, a better understanding in ecology.

The students selected from large urban areas are taking part in a program that will broaden their backgrounds in science through actual field studies, he said.

Dr. Thomas said the program will be conducted in a university manner, but it is not designed to replace regular high school science instruction. No official college or high school credit will be granted in the program.

Field trips will include visits to the UM Biological Station on Yellow Bay on Flathead Lake, Glacier National Park, Lubrecht Experimental Forest, National Bison Range, Blackfoot-Clearwater area, Lolo Peak Wilderness Area, Swan River drainage, Lindbergh Lake in the Mission Mountain Wilderness Area and the Hanford Atomic Energy Reactor in Washington, Dr. Thomas said.

He said an intensive introduction to field ecology through lectures, labs, and field studies will be given in ten major areas of the science.

Dr. Arnold Silverman, UM associate professor of geology, will present the geological phase of the program and Dr. Thomas J. Nimlos, UM associate professor of forestry, will orientate the group to the fields of soils and alpine ecology.

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Dr. James Habeck, UM associate professor of botany, will teach principles of ecology while Dr. Arden R. Gaufin of the University of Utah zoology department and Dr. William E. Vinyard of the Humboldt State College botany department will teach aquatic communities.

Professor Melvin Morris of the UM School of Forestry will handle the grassland management aspect of the program with Dr. W. Leslie Pengelly, also of the forestry school, presenting the wildlife phase to the students.

Dr. Mitsuru J. Nakamura, UM chairman and professor of microbiology, will present a section in bacteria and water supplies and Dr. Thomas will survey the field of pesticides and herbicides with the group.

Dr. Wayne P. Van Meter, UM associate professor of chemistry, will conclude the introductory sessions with a section on radioactivity in the environment.

Dr. Thomas also said Dr. Robert B. Garrabrant, associate program director of the secondary science training program for the National Science Foundation will visit the Missoula campus from July 1-4 to visit with the participants and instructors.