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Chicago nun enjoys work in secular NSF program at University of Montana

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CHICAGO NUN ENJOYS WORK
IN SECULAR NSF PROGRAM
AT UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

MISSOULA--

Sister David Ann never gets tired of studying!

She is having a "terrific" time working toward a master's degree for her fourth consecutive summer at the University of Montana, Missoula, under a National Science Foundation grant. The nun, a native of Chicago, spent 18 years studying for a bachelor's degree, so four years to her are "nothing."

While studying for her bachelor's degree from 1945-62, Sister David Ann taught high school courses, because, she said, "in the 'old' days, anybody could teach after two years of college."

After she completes her summer on the Missoula campus, Sister David Ann will teach biology at St. Mary Woods College, near Terre Haute, Ind. She is looking forward to this assignment, because her classes will be smaller and less frequent than classes she previously taught at an Evanstown, Ill., high school.

About 40 high school biology teachers from around the United States are studying under the NSF program with Sister David Ann through Aug. 22.

The program objective, according to Dr. Sherman J. Preece, program director and chairman of UM's biology department, is to update the teachers in their field.

The program, which offers courses in biology and applied fields, is sequential, allowing each participant four years to complete his requirements for a master's degree. Dr. Preece said the teachers do not have to be urged to study, because they must be already motivated to receive NSF stipends.

The students may write a thesis or earn graduate credits and take comprehensive tests to complete their master's degree requirements. Most of the NSF participants choose the latter option.

more

CHICAGO NUN ENJOYS WORK--2

The program provides an excellent opportunity during Friday "noon seminars" for the teachers to compare and analyze each other's ideas and find "consolation" when they share the same problems.

Guest lecturers involved in research lead seminars to expose the teachers to breakthroughs in biological science.

The NSF program provides other activities besides those on the serious side. Sister David Ann is social chairman for the program and plans picnics and banquets throughout the balmy Montana summer season.

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