YOU CAN LEAD THE KIDS TO CAMPUS...AND MAYBE MAKE THEM THINK

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Have you wished you could find a way to: a) encourage high school students who have shown an interest in science; b) expose potential students to the atmosphere of your campus and your department; and c) establish more direct contact with area high school teachers?

These were the objectives of the Manchester College science division in designing a series of annual, one-day workshops that bring high school students and their teachers to campus. Each division member who chose to be involved planned a two-hour hands-on experience in his or her area of expertise. Originally all topics were organized with an environmental emphasis. Recently, however, other areas of science and science-related activities have been included.

Letters listing the topics were sent to area science teachers inviting them to bring interested students. Pre-registration by mail included an indication of topic preference. Participants were assigned to a morning and an afternoon session in accordance with their stated preferences. Since one of the objectives was to facilitate interaction of college faculty and the students and teachers attending, sessions were restricted to ten participants and total attendance to one hundred.

Success of the workshop seems to be partly dependent on maintaining the small group emphasis and on making participation by faculty on a voluntary basis. This type of experience affords the high school student a different view of college life from the one usually obtained by visiting a campus. Most college tours are passive experiences, what students see are the facilities where science might be done or where someone else is doing science and can be watched. In our workshops they become part of the classroom setting. They experience college. Participants leave with first-person knowledge of the student-professor interaction small colleges claim to be their hallmark.

Response in terms of number of registrants as well as enthusiasm following the workshops has convinced the faculty that the project should be continued. A second workshop for this academic year is now being planned for the spring term. Additional information about topics and mechanisms of implementation are available from the author.

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The fairest thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion which stands at the cradle of true science. He who knows it not, and can no longer wonder, no longer feel amazement, is as good as dead. We all had this priceless talent when we were young. But as time goes by, many of us lose it. The true scientist never loses the faculty of amazement. It is the essence of his being.

Dr. Hans Selye