



Press Release

Tuesday, February 7, 2012

***Microscopes to Middle Schools* program reveals the microscopic creatures all around us**

Honolulu, HI – As part of its wide-ranging education program, the Center for Microbial Oceanography: Research and Education (C-MORE), based at the University of Hawaii – Manoa, is partnering with the Hawaii State Department of Education (DOE) and the UH Fostering Inspiration and Relevance through Science and Technology (FIRST) Pre-Academy Initiative to distribute digital video microscopes and related supplies (valued at \$1775) to Hawaii's DOE middle schools statewide.

C-MORE hopes this new program will shed light on the hidden world of micro-organisms (or microbes). "Every drop of sea water contains some of the most important organisms on the planet, and most people probably don't even realize it! Microbes are the engines of the marine food web, and produce about half of the oxygen that we breathe," says Jim Foley, a Marine Science Educator with C-MORE. After using the video microscope, one teacher wrote about the impact this experience had on her students, "These lessons are blowing them away. They had no idea that there were microscopic things living in the ocean- and they asked millions of questions along the lines of "So when we swim at the beach, these things are touching us?" and ... if there were "things" in our drinking water. It totally opened their eyes to the fact that there are microscopic creatures all around us!"



Students collect microscopic organisms using a plankton net (top) and view microbes under a microscope (bottom).
Images courtesy of C-MORE, SOEST/UHM

To receive the equipment, teachers must attend a C-MORE professional development workshop to learn how to safely collect plankton and how to operate and care for the microscope. Teachers who attend the workshop will earn DOE professional development credit (called "HOUSSE points") and learn about free hands-on and online curricular resources. The first *Microscopes to Middle Schools* workshop was held on Oahu on December 3. The next two workshops will be on February 11 in Kahului, Maui; and March 3 in Hilo, Hawaii.

To receive workshop information, to sign up, or to be added to our mailing list, please contact Jim Foley (foleyj@hawaii.edu or 956-7739) with your name, school, and contact information. Please also visit our website: cmore.soest.hawaii.edu/education.htm.

SOEST Media Contact: Marcie Grabowski, (808) 956-3151, mworkman@hawaii.edu

The School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology at the University of Hawaii at Manoa was established by the Board of Regents of the University of Hawai'i in 1988 in recognition of the need to realign and further strengthen the excellent education and research resources available within the University. SOEST brings together four academic departments, three research institutes, several federal cooperative programs, and support facilities of the highest quality in the nation to meet challenges in the ocean, earth and planetary sciences and technologies.

www.soest.hawaii.edu