



Monday, December 2, 2002

## OU partnership receives national recognition

SBC's National Telecommunications Partnership Awards program, sponsored by the SBC Foundation and the National Association of Partners in Education, recognized the Oakland University-Rochester and Pontiac school district partnership Teaching to Learn Project as an honorable mention prizewinner in a competitive national program.

The Teaching to Learn Project was one of 13 organizations across the country honored in the 2002 awards program. The Teaching to Learn Project received honorable mention tributes, including a \$500 cash award. The partnership was honored with other winners during the National Association of Partners in Education and International Partnership Network 2002 Global Partnership Summit on Learning, Employability and Citizenship, which took place in Washington, D.C., in November.

"Technology has changed the way we live, play and learn," said Laura Sanford, president of the SBC Foundation. "Through the development of innovative partnership programs that integrate telecommunications technology into the classroom and curricula, community collaborations are creatively and effectively reshaping the educational experience.

"The SBC National Telecommunications Partnership Awards are important because they recognize those teachers and partnerships that effectively incorporate telecommunications technology into instructional activities. It is extremely important to build new opportunities for learning through creativity and innovation in telecommunications. SBC recognizes and congratulates the Teaching to Learn Project for its achievements."

To win the award, the Teaching to Learn Project group submitted a proposal that described an innovative partnership, which has been funded over the past three years by the U.S. Department of Education's Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology (PT3) program. John McEneaney, Ledong Li and Maria Cseh, all associate professors of education at Oakland, were part of the program design team that worked on the proposal.

By placing established educators and undergraduate teacher education students with technology skills in a mutually supportive, collaborative environment which itself is enhanced through information technology, the Teaching to Learn PT3 project addresses many problems at once. This PT3 project is focused around an elective four-credit course. Only students who have successfully completed a required technology applications course are eligible to enroll in the course, which provides guidance in the development of consulting skills, opportunities to engage in problem-based learning situated in K-12 and university classrooms, and a very strong emphasis on being involved in a community of learners both face-to-face and online. Students are required to spend eight to 10 hours per week for 10 of the 14 weeks of the semester in activities related to their consulting work.

"The Teaching to Learn Project has been very successful," said Anne Porter, associate professor of education at Oakland University. "Because the classroom teacher determines the 'curriculum,' our student consultants become very adept problem solvers. They can't just 'deliver' a pre-planned course of learning. They must, in many cases, diagnose the specific challenge the teacher is facing in bringing technology into his or her classroom, then design a material or experience to help the teacher develop a solution to the problem. We believe this focus on individualization is very important in influencing how our teacher education students will incorporate technology in their own future classrooms."

The SBC National Telecommunications Partnership Awards program was established in 1998 to recognize outstanding educational partnerships that help teachers integrate telecommunications technology into classroom practice and document positive outcomes on student achievement and success. The awards support local efforts to improve teaching and learning by increasing access to information technologies and strengthening technology-training programs.

### SUMMARY

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