



Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2007 – 2008
(July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008)



As the fiscal year of 2006-2007 came to a conclusion, there was an air of optimism throughout the DNA EpiCenter (DNAE). We had 210 children enrolled in the summer camp programs with a full compliment of YouthALIVE! Interns and Teaching Assistants ready to greet young people from around Connecticut and nearby states.



The Board of Trustees initiated a search for new Board members to create an expanded Board to help boost the organization to a new level. Plans were underway to expand the staff with a Director of Development and an additional Staff Scientist to allow the DNAE to expand programs and stabilize fund raising activity over the first half of the new fiscal year.

The DNAE began to explore cooperative arrangements with other Eastern Connecticut non-profit organizations to provide mutually beneficial services to schools and the public at-large.

Toward the end of the first half of the fiscal year, we hired a Director of Development to lead us into a promising second half of the year. Under the leadership of the Director of Development, a spring gala to honor “Women In Science” was born. The Barbara McClintock - 2008 Class of DNA EpiCenter Scholars honored the contributions of five women who made their mark on science and the scientific education of young people. This was the most successful fund raising activity of the DNAE in more than five (5) years. Those honored this year were: Dr. June Bradlaw, Dr. Susan Froshauer, Mrs. Carol Milne, State Representative Elizabeth “Betsy” Ritter, and State Senator Andrea Stillman. It should be noted that Mrs. Carol Milne, after serving on the Board for more than ten (10) years, was promoted to the position of Trustee Emeritus.

There were setbacks and advances in terms of our seeking funding from both the State of Connecticut and the Federal Government. The bill that was entered into the General Assembly did not make it out of the Appropriations Committee. Even though that was a huge setback, we remained hopeful because, once again, our cause was being championed by State Senator Andrea Stillman and State Representative Elizabeth “Betsy” Ritter. They, along with the remainder of the Eastern Connecticut Legislative Delegation and the DNAE staff and board, remained hopeful that the request could be handled through other legislative venues. This was not resolved as the fiscal year ended.

Congressman Joseph Courtney notified the DNAE that an appropriation was approved by Congress for the DNAE educational programs. The monies would be available through the U.S. Department of Education. Although this was a positive action, the money would not be available until after the close of our fiscal year.

At the close of the fiscal year, the DNAE suffered the loss of the President of the Board of Trustees and a member of the Executive Committee. Both resigned because of personal occupational changes.



Left to Right:
State Representative Elizabeth “Betsy” Ritter, Executive Director Abby Demars, Board President Dr. Bruce Cohen, and State Senator Andrea Stillman smile about the release of the \$250,000 of State funding for the DNAE.



BUILDING ENVIRONMENT

In September, plans were developed to convert some of our Workshop & Maintenance Room space into a Resource & Assembly Room for the staff. This was undertaken with existing staff completing most of the work. The newly renovated space allowed for a much needed area where all of the curriculum binders could be assembled with ease and for storage of all of the binder supplies. At the same time, a drop ceiling was installed in the Workshop & Maintenance Room which helped lower the heating costs and, by repainting the floor, it made it look like new.



Most of the heavy labor of moving equipment in the Workshop & Maintenance Room was completed by the Inmates from the J. B. Gates Correctional Facility Outreach Program. We have successfully worked with this program for four (4) years. They continue to provide us with much needed labor including: carpentry, landscaping, and painting. This year we were fortunate to have them around to help when Christopher Portelance, owner of Chris Tree Removal, donated his time and services. Between his two visits, we had a total of eight (8) dead and/or unsafe trees cut down. The Inmates piled all of the brush and did all of the clean-up. Chris was kind enough to come back with this wood-chipper to chip all of the brush piles the Inmates created.

Also helping to maintain our landscaping are students from the Grasso Regional Vocational Technical School's BioEnvironmental Technology Program. We have successfully worked with them for three (3) years. Typically at the end of the school year, they donate and plant a large number of the plants they have raised during the school year as well as clean-out and hook-up our waterfall.

At the beginning of this fiscal year, our phone system left something to be desired. However, by the middle of the fiscal year, we were the proud owners of a gently used phone system thanks to Carol Mahier and her team at Hospice of Southeastern Connecticut. As Hospice prepared to move to a brand new facility, we not only received a donation of a phone system but filing cabinets, white boards, and credenzas.

As you can see, we have continued the tradition of improving the building and its grounds in a very cost-effective way thanks to the various donations from the community at-large.

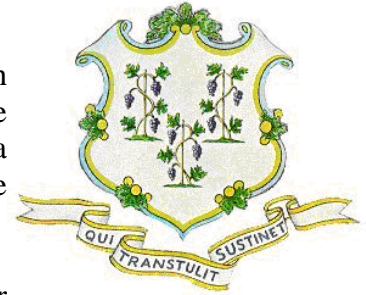
For the third consecutive year, we passed both our City of New London Fire Inspection and our surprise Connecticut State Department of Public Health Inspection with a 100% compliance rating.

FINANCIAL

At the beginning of the fiscal year, our ordinary income was marginal and would increase through our ambitious camp programs in July and August. We were able to liquidate an outstanding financial obligation through a negotiated settlement with a contractor, thus ending a long term liability.

In July, Electric Boat Employees' Community Service Association provided an \$8,500 grant to be used to provide summer camp scholarships to low income students in the New London area.

The State of Connecticut passed Public Act 07-1 which provided \$250,000 for the DNAE. This grant was made available through the Connecticut State Department of Education. After a lengthy application process, the funds for this grant were made available to the DNAE in October.



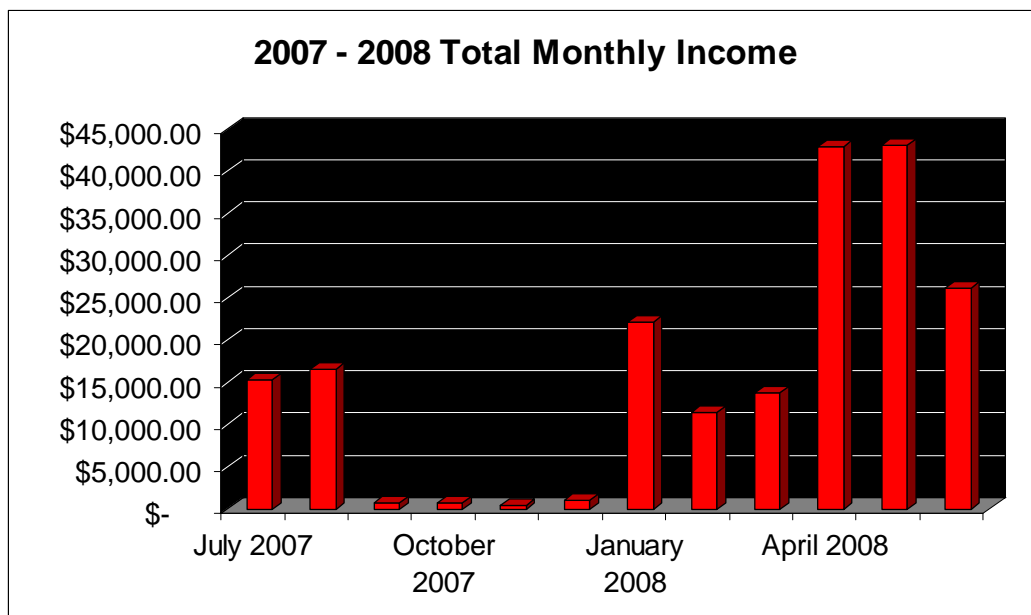
Thanks to a \$3,000 grant received at the end of last fiscal year from Dime Savings Bank, we were able to engage in a contract with Miranda Creative in Norwich to completely overhaul and reconstruct our web site. In December, our new web site went live, and it now serves as an extremely versatile marketing tool that is cost effective.

The 2007 Annual Appeal raised \$20,930 which was substantially short of the Board's goal.

For the second year in a row, the DNAE received an unqualified Annual Audit Report which indicated continual improvement in our accounting procedures.

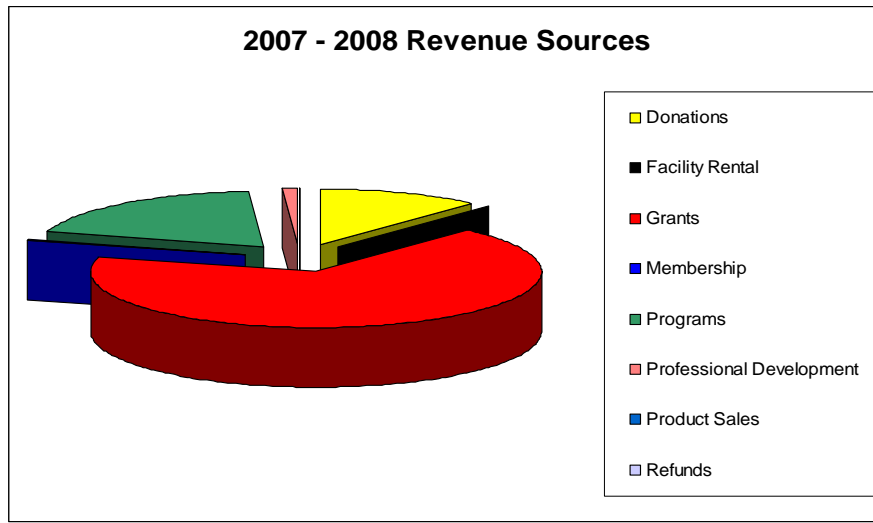
The Kitchings Foundation increased their funding of our YouthALIVE! Program by an additional \$5,000. Their generosity provided us with a grant for \$30,000 to be used during the first quarter of next fiscal year.

Our most successful fund raiser, "The Barbara McClintock – 2008 Class of DNAE Scholars," raised \$25,225 for our new camp program, O.M.G! G.I.R.L.S. (Oh My Gosh! Girls In Real Laboratory Situations). This will become an annual event for the DNAE.



* Note that the \$250,000 grant received from the State of Connecticut in October is not reflected in this graph so as not to skew the rest of the data.

2007 - 2008 Revenue Sources



Grants Submitted in 2007 – 2008 Fiscal Year

Agency / Foundation Name	Amount Requested	Date Requested	Project	Status	Amount Approved
*Kitchings Foundation	\$ 25,000	1/25/07	YouthALIVE! Intern Program	Approved	\$ 25,000
**Congressional Grant	\$ 71,725	2/22/2007	Operational funds	Approved	\$ 71,725
Electric Boat Employees' Community Services Association	\$ 5,000	7/13/2007	Camp scholarships & program grants	Approved	\$ 8,500
Chelsea Groton Foundation	\$ 5,000	2/28/2008	Summer camp scholarships	Denied	\$ -
***Kitchings Foundation	\$ 40,000	3/3/08	YouthALIVE! Intern Program	Approved	\$ 30,000
Catholic Foundation of the Diocese of Norwich	\$ 32,250	3/31/2008	School groups & PDWs	Denied	\$ -
Chamber of Commerce of Eastern CT	\$ 8,400	3/31/2008	Summer camp scholarships	Approved	\$ 2,800
Eastern Federal Bank Foundation	\$ 3,576	3/31/2008	Summer camp celebration	Denied	\$ -
Savings Institute Financial Group Foundation	\$ 30,575	3/31/2008	School groups & PDWs	Denied	\$ -
Northeast Utilities Foundation	\$ 997	4/15/2008	Equipment purchase	Denied	\$ -
Monsanto Fund	\$ 19,675	4/15/2008	Exhibit	Approved	\$ 12,275
Pfizer Foundation	\$ 24,575	4/25/2008	DNA Day & Family Days	Denied	\$ -
Sullivan Foundation	\$ 14,990	5/1/2008	School groups & PDWs	Approved	\$ 5,000
Groton/Ledyard Rotary	\$ 2,400	5/6/2008	Summer camp scholarships	Approved	\$ 1,050
Ledyard Rotary	\$ 1,000	5/6/2008	Summer camp scholarships	Approved	\$ 700
Mystic Rotary	\$ 1,000	5/6/2008	Summer camp scholarships	No response	\$ -
New London Rotary	\$ 1,000	5/6/2008	Summer camp scholarships	No response	\$ -
Niantic Rotary	\$ 1,000	5/6/2008	Summer camp scholarships	No response	\$ -
Norwich Rotary	\$ 1,700	5/6/2008	Summer camp scholarships	No response	\$ -
Waterford Rotary	\$ 1,000	5/6/2008	Summer camp scholarships	Denied	\$ -
Palmer Foundation	\$ 51,500	5/15/2008	Salaries and equipment	Approved	\$ 20,000
Bodenwein Foundation	\$ 10,200	5/15/2008	Salaries and equipment	Denied	\$ -
Electric Boat Employees' Community Services Association	\$ 10,000	5/19/2008	Camp scholarships & program grants	Approved	\$ 8,500
TOTAL	\$ 337,563				\$ 88,825

*This grant was received on 3/19/07, but funds were expended during the 1st quarter of the 2007 – 2008 fiscal year.

**The original Congressional Grant was submitted to Congressman Joseph Courtney's Office February 22, 2007, but the second piece of the proposal was submitted to the U.S. Department of Education on June 10, 2008.

***This grant was received on 4/9/08, but it will be restricted until July 1, 2008.

Restricted Funds Carried Over From 2005 – 2006 Fiscal Year

Grant From	Amount Received	Date Received	Amount Used in 2006-2007 Fiscal Year	Amount Used in 2007-2008 Fiscal Year	Amount Carried Over to 2008-2009 Fiscal Year
Liberty Bank	\$ 3,850	3/15/06	\$ 0	\$ 1,570	\$ 2,280
Community Foundation of SECT	\$ 15,000	3/29/06	\$ 0	\$ 15,000	–
Carse Foundation	\$ 2,000	4/19/06	\$ 0	\$ 600	\$ 1,400
Pfizer Community Programs	\$ 15,000	6/5/06	\$ 6,830	\$ 2,680	\$ 5,490
Dime Bank Foundation	\$ 3,000	6/19/06	\$ 0	\$ 3,000	–

PROGRAMS AND CURRICULUM

The DNA EpiCenter Staff Scientists worked hard during the school year to design two (2) new camps that will be unveiled next fiscal year during the 2008 Summer Camps. C.S.I. New London was designed, for campers ages 12-15, out of necessity. Many campers have already taken our C.S.I. In Training Camp, for campers ages 11-14, so we needed to create a program that would serve as a continuation of that camp. O.M.G! G.I.R.L.S. (Oh My Gosh! Girls In Real Laboratory Situations) was created based on feedback from parents who said they wanted to send their daughter to science camp but felt she would be more comfortable in an all girls environment. The time spent designing these camps detracted from writing the elementary school curriculum. Therefore, we anticipate launching the grades 3-5 curriculum during the first quarter of next fiscal year.



O.M.G! G.I.R.L.S. campers learn how to use pipettes.

In March, the Executive Director and her educational staff were financially able to attend the National Science Teachers Association National Convention because it was in Boston. The seminars were educational and informative, and the exhibition hall provided a myriad of networking opportunities that were taken advantage of. The day after the convention, the Boston Museum of Science hosted The 13th Annual Symposium On Biotechnology Education where the Executive Director along with Board of Trustee member, Dr. Paul Chomet, presented a workshop titled “Bringing Agricultural Biotechnology To The Classroom.” The DNAE educational staff attended other workshops and staffed our vendor table.

During the summer we ran our summer camps for a total of 210 campers. We also ran programs for campers visiting from the Mystic Aquarium and Yale University’s Genetics Camp. Throughout the school year we had school visits from some new schools districts as well as repeat customers serving 1,644 students. We also ran Professional Development Workshops for 54 middle school and high school teachers.

We had U.S. Congressman Joseph Courtney visit while students from Haddam-Killingworth Middle School were running an experiment. Connecticut College's Science Methods Class came for a visit to run our Mixtures & Murder! Program. We staffed a table at the CPTV Science Expo in Hartford, and the Executive Director gave a presentation titled "The Science Behind Stem Cell Research" to the American Association of University Women Lower Valley Branch in Old Saybrook. Also, for the first time, the DNAE educational staff ran an after school series at the DNAE for students from Nathan Hale Elementary School in New London. Funding was provided by a grant written by New London Youth Affairs. Also, we donated our time and supplies to staff a table for three and a half (3.5) days at Pfizer's SAMJAM in Groton.



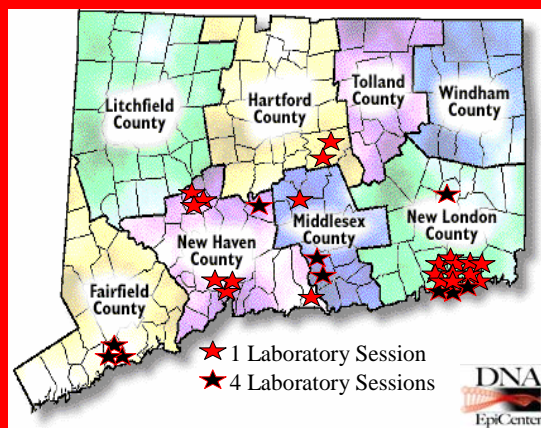
Congressman Joseph Courtney with students from Haddam-Killingworth Middle School.

DNA EpiCenter Visitor Statistics 2007-2008

Outreach Total # Of Hands-On Sessions	78
Outreach Total # Of Participants For Hands-On Sessions	617
In-House Total # Of Hands-On Sessions	77
In-House Total # Of Participants For Hands-On Sessions	1644
Total # Of Teachers Trained	54
Total # Of Visitors (program non-participants)	1209



DNA EpiCenter School/Group Visits 2007-2008



PERSONNEL

Due to resignations of both of our Staff Scientists to pursue a classroom teaching position and a research position at a pharmaceutical company at the end of last fiscal year, we hired a part-time Staff Scientist and a part-time Laboratory Coordinator to work with our YouthALIVE! Interns and Teaching Assistants for summer camps. When funding became available, the part-time Staff Scientist became a full-time employee and an additional full-time Staff Scientist was added.

New members of the Board of Trustees were added to fill positions opened on the Board. Negotiations began for a new Director of Development.

Toward the end of the fiscal year, one Staff Scientist was discharged for cause and another resigned because her spouse was transferred. We immediately hired a new Staff Scientist who was able to come on board and teach all of the scheduled programs. We hired a part-time Facilities Manager & Educator in September, and he joined us full-time in



January. Our part-time Administrative Assistant graduated from Eastern Connecticut State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and joined us full-time at the end of May. We also engaged in a contract with an independent Grant Writer in February hoping that part of the outcome would be that it would allow the Executive Director to focus more on marketing.

FUTURE PLANS

Our future plans include a Board of Trustees retreat in July to revise and up-date our Business and Operational Plans and to expand the Board of Trustees which will permit the DNAE to grow and become less dependent on the State of Connecticut for financial well being. Our independent Grant Writer will enable us to become more aggressive in our ability to obtain grants.

We will be approaching other organizations in order to collaborate, not only in grant writing but, in program utilization for school groups.

As our staff stabilizes, we will be able to increase our program offerings and move forward with the development of our new elementary school program. This new program offering will be compatible with, and enhance, the Connecticut Core Science Curriculum Framework. Most importantly, it will allow the DNAE to enter into a new market thus helping to generate new sources of income.



YouthALIVE! Intern Tasheenah Brown and a LEGO Engineering I camper take a break to smile for the camera.



These DNA Detectives campers record their experimental results in their laboratory notebooks.



This C.S.I. In Training camper is excited to watch DNA begin to appear during his DNA Extraction Experiment.