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Arcata High, HSU Spur Energy Study

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Arcata High School has become one of the first institutions to participate in hands-on testing of the Hydrogen Technology and Energy Curriculum (HyTEC) project, a national effort funded by the U.S. Department of Energy in partnership with Humboldt State University's Schatz Energy Research Center (SERC) and Berkeley's Lawrence Hall of Science, which is chiefly responsible for curriculum development.



SERC Research Engineers James Zoellick and Richard Engel have spent hours at Arcata High in testing SERC's new equipment for teaching students about hydrogen energy. The school's chemistry students attended three class periods, learning about the chemistry of hydrogen and fuel cells, assembling and testing their own miniature hydrogen energy systems and calculating the efficiency of the fuel cells and other pertinent classroom equipment.

As part of the HyTEC initiative, SERC is taking the lead in the creation of the fuel cells and devices being introduced to secondary students.

Zoellick and Engel, who have been at Arcata High three times in recent weeks, say the school is one of the first to participate in the federal initiative and that local students responded enthusiastically to the opportunity to learn about hydrogen. They quoted the teenage participants as saying the exercise was "really fun" and "the fuel cells are really cool."

One student's written workshop evaluation exclaimed, "This is a valuable part of a curriculum and should be taught at every school in the nation!"

SERC plans to use feedback from the Arcata High students and their teachers to improve the HyTEC materials before they are tested in other schools nationwide.

Editors & news directors: a photo of participating Arcata High students is available at news.humboldt.edu/gallery.phtml.

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