

### Professional Development

Science is progressing at a faster rate than ever before. As a teacher, I believe professional development is essential to keep pace with the standards of this field. As a scientist I attended many seminars and read many papers in my area so that I could incorporate new ideas and new techniques into my field work. I found that talking to others in my field and sharing concepts was essential to my success and growth. I feel that this is even more relevant to being a teacher. Today I seek out new opportunities including the STEM program at the Perot Museum and Texas Parks and Wildlife to incorporate into the science I teach to my students. However, professional development should not be limited to content alone.

I have been very privileged to be part of the UTEACH program through UT Dallas which, in addition to my BS degree, has provided me with many pedagogical techniques. In fact, this week I have attended a professional development on 'Navigating the ELPS' for my students. I have also been a part of benchmark analyses, staff development meetings, peer-learning communities, and campus needs assessments.

Professional development should be a long term goal of every one. This on-going education not only increases ways to keep you interested and interesting, but leads to a deeper understanding for our students. I have often found that it leads to even more excitement on my part and shows my love for life-long learning. Our students deserve a high-quality education and, in order for this to happen, they need high-quality teachers.