

**Professional Development Grant Award Report
Summer 2009**

**Dr. T Yamashita
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Department of Biological Sciences**

B. Restatement of problem researched, creative work, or professional enhancement opportunity

This award allowed Tech Biology faculty to attend the 2009 American Arachnological Society meeting hosted by Dr. T Yamashita and ATU's Department of Biological Sciences at the Lake Point Conference Center.

C. Brief review of the professional enhancement opportunity, creative work, or research procedure

The American Arachnological Society, the largest professional organization in the world for the study of arachnids, meets every summer at a host university. This meeting is hosted by a society member and brings together arachnologists from across the United States as well as several foreign countries. It has been hosted by several well known institutions such as the Field Museum of Natural History, the University of California-Berkeley, and the University of Florida-Gainesville. At this summer meeting, faculty and students present current research with arachnids. This research works spans across the biological sciences from molecular to organismal and ecological studies. A business meeting is also scheduled to discuss matters concerning the Arachnology society and its journal, The Journal of Arachnology.

This meeting was an ideal setting for Tech Biology faculty to exchange scientific information and discuss professional matters relevant to an undergraduate biology curriculum with faculty from many diverse universities and colleges. The funds from this award provided the basic registration costs for several biology faculty to attend the five day meeting.

D. Summary of findings, outcomes, or experiences had

The 2009 American Arachnological Society meeting took place over five days in late June through early July and included a mixer, oral and poster presentations, a general society business meeting, a banquet, and a field trip. Tech faculty experienced current arachnid research presented by over 90 faculty and graduate student attendees from institutions around the United States and overseas. The research presentations ranged from phylogenetics and social behavior to physiology and ecology. This meeting also allowed newer faculty the opportunity to experience a national scientific meeting without the burden of travel expenses. In addition, as many presentations were given by faculty and graduate students from leading universities, Tech biology faculty were able to experience high quality research presentations. The meeting was seen as a resounding success and showed Tech's Lake Point Conference Center as an excellent venue for scientific societies.

E. Conclusions and recommendations

The Arachnological Society meeting shows that professional societies and organizations are an ideal target group for activities at the Lake Point Conference Center. It provides an excellent site for multiday meetings, and can serve as a

platform to significantly improve the professional development of faculty and departments that host these meetings.