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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Community supporters give over \$124,000 to support math, science and technology
programs in Caddo schools**

SHREVEPORT, La – Nineteen supporters recently contributed over \$124,000 to advance five innovative math, science and technology programs in Caddo Schools.

According to Ollie Tyler, Caddo Parish Schools Superintendent, “These dollars are being used to support unique programs reaching the gamut of students from those that are gifted to those that are at-risk. We appreciate the support of these individuals and institutions as we work to continue to improve math, science and technology outcomes in our schools.”

The nineteen contributors include:

AEP/SWEPCO

The Biomedical Research Foundation

The Charles T. Beaird Foundation

Mrs. Emma Boyd

Capital One Bank

The Committee of One Hundred

The Community Foundation of Shreveport-Bossier

Mrs. Billie Corley

Mrs. Stella Chapman

General Motors Shreveport Assembly Plant

Mrs. Bobbie Hicks

Mr. George Khoury

The Magale Foundation

Mrs. Patricia Peyton

The Poindexter Foundation

RESCUECOM- Mr. Jon Chumley

The Rotary Club of Southwest Shreveport

Mrs. Virginia Shehee

The five programs that have been enhanced as a result of these donations include: The Science and Medicine Academic Research Training (SMART) Program; The Math, Science, and Technology Program; The For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) and LEGO Robotic Program; The Environmental and Spatial Technology (EAST) Program; and The Biotech Magnet Program.

The Biomedical Research Foundation has been an important supporter of this effort to advance science and technology education in Caddo Schools. The Foundation has helped to initiate these programs and also coordinates private fundraising efforts. According to Jack Sharp, Biomedical Research Foundation President, "We appreciate the response that the community has made in support of these programs and hope there are others who will be attracted to invest. The Foundation is involved not only because we value education but because we must have a technology-trained workforce if we are to reach our mission of cultivating and attracting life science enterprises and related technologies."

A brief outline of the five programs and how funds are being used is as follows:

MST Program

The goal of the MST program is to promote and support best practice teaching of mathematics, science and technology. This is achieved through a hands-on, project-based curriculum that utilizes technology to stimulate learning. The MST program now

involves 5 schools, 105 trained teachers and 5,000 students in the Caddo Parish School System. Over \$20,000 was raised to purchase computers at Woodlawn High School and Linwood Middle School to advance the MST concept.

FIRST Robotics Program

The FIRST program is a robotics lab course for junior and senior level students that teams professionals and students in order to solve engineering design problems in an intense and competitive environment. Competitions are held at both the regional and national levels. The FIRST LEGO competition is considered the “little league” of the FIRST Robotics competition and involves sixth, seventh and eighth graders. Approximately 80 students are involved in the FIRST programs and over \$24,000 was raised to support entry fees, travel and lodging to FIRST robotics competitions.

EAST Laboratory

EAST is an innovative project based learning environment in which students work together in a collaborative setting using the most current, high-end technologies available such as computer aided design (CAD); global positioning systems (GPS); and geographical positioning systems (GPS). The class is structured around students developing specific projects to improve their school and community. Over \$40,000 was raised to expand the Southwood High School EAST lab doubling the number of students to 320 who can benefit from the program each year.

Biotech Magnet Program

The Biotech Magnet Program is a hands-on intensive magnet program whose curriculum is modeled after the renowned Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Virginia. It emphasizes hands-on laboratory experiences and an enhanced four year secondary curriculum which integrates the humanities with advanced mathematics, computer science, statistics, chemistry, laboratory techniques, physics, biotechnology ethics, and research methodology. The Biotech Magnet Program started in August, 2006 and 35 students are enrolled. Over \$20,000 was raised to purchase equipment for the classrooms.

SMART Program

The SMART program provides top local high school seniors with the opportunity to mentor with LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport scientists for a year. They participate in over 800 hours of laboratory work and compete at prestigious national and international competitions including the Intel Science Talent Search and the Seimens Westinghouse Science Competition. Over \$25,000 was raised to support the summer laboratory experience for students and operating and travel costs. 11 students are participating this year with five from Caddo Parish and six from Bossier Parish.

