Special Skills Workshop # 3: Poster Making – Session 1 and 2

Speaker: Ms. Andrea Burrows, Grant Coordinator for NSF GK-12 Fellows and RET Projects
Dates: Friday, June 25th; Thursday, July 8th; July 15, 2010
Times: 9:00 – 11:00 AM; 11:00 AM -12 Noon; 9:00 AM -12:00 Noon
Venue: University of Cincinnati, Baldwin Hall, room 860B

Prepared by:
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The RET and REU groups joined to attend three sessions regarding poster making on June 25th, July 8th, and July 15, 2010 in room 860 B in Baldwin Hall on the campus of the University of Cincinnati. The first session included a one-hour "tower competition" where RET and REU group members competed for the tallest tower that held the most mass. The groups then had to make a poster of this to share with the large group. Participants learned the fine points of poster making with this fun activity and poster creation session. In the second poster making session the groups focused on reviewing the tower posters and the initial posters for RET and REU. The photographs below are pictures of some of the workshop's attendees during the second session. On the left is a picture of several of the students participating in the REU program. On the right are some of the RET teachers.

Ms. Burrows, the coordinator of both NSF RET and GK-12 Fellows grants and a education doctoral candidate at the University of Cincinnati, spent time asking the group about any questions or concerns they were having in poster making. She also took time to give advice on how to present a nice-looking, professional poster that is easily understandable.

The workshop participants previously were given the outlines for and details about what would make the best posters as far as aesthetics. The researchers were told about font sizes, colors, branding, etc. in the first poster making session.

The third session was to check the progress of the posters and allow the teams to receive feedback from everyone in the room, including the members of the other research groups. There was a total of aboout 12 posters presented on the projection screen during the session. Each member of the workshop was asked to work with a nearby attendee to evaluate the posters that was displayed. The evaluations were to made by asking several questions about the poster's title, colors, font sizes,

information being presented, etc. The evaluation came in the form of ranking the various aspects of the poster from 1-5, with 5 being the best possible ranking.

None of the 12 posters were completed. This is primarily because both the RET and REU groups were in the midst of their research and possibly had not completed their research in depth enough to present a final poster. Ms. Burrows then called each research project team to the front of the room so the team members could read the feedback about their posters.

The team members were then told to take the feedback they received to make improvements to the posters. The teams were not required to make the improvements, but many felt having a fresh set fo eyes on their posters was very informative and enlightening. Many of the workshop's members felt that having someone who was undergoing (and in most cases struggling) with the same project bought both humility and enlightenment to the project.