Dear prospective science mentor,

During the school year, a select group of Aptos, Pajaro Valley and Watsonville High School students will be enrolled in a Coastal Ecology science class where they will learn about environmental issues related to local watersheds. The class is taught by a PVUSD teacher, Greg McBride, Gary Martindale and Satina Ciandro, respectively, in collaboration with instructors from the Monterey Bay Aquarium. The class has several components:

1. Develop a field-based science project
   - September

2. Collect field data: **Thursdays** at Younger Lagoon in Santa Cruz from 1:00pm-4:00pm and **Fridays** at Elkhorn Slough from 1:00pm – 4:00pm.
   - Oct – Dec

3. Create a research poster outlining the research project and findings
   - Jan-Mar

4. Present data and findings to the scientific community
   - Mar-April

5. Present their project to the Watsonville community
   - April

6. Present data and findings to their families at an end of the year celebration
   - May

7. Create positive change in their community by developing an outreach piece to present to a "stakeholder" in their community (eg. website) or coordinating an activity (eg. a restoration activity or campus cleanup)
   - May

August 2015
The WATCH program is based on a student driven, project-based learning model. Their goal is to create positive environmental impacts through encouraging behavior change in their community. In the course of the project, we pair the students up with adults with different areas of expertise to help the students in the process. Because the students choose the topics of their project, your role is focused on aiding the students in the scientific process rather than being a content expert.

The needs of the students vary per group, and the following is a list of what you might expect to do as a mentor of a WATCH project group:

- Attending a Mentor Training event on September 17th, from 10am-1pm (Younger Lagoon) and September 18th, 10am -1pm at Elkhorn Slough Reserve

- Being available to accompany students out into the field during their data collection days from 1:00pm-4:30pm, and a check in with Aquarium staff from 12:30 -1pm:
  - Younger Lagoon: 10/15, 10/22, 10/29, 11/5, 11/12, 11/19, 12/3, 12/10
  - Elkhorn Slough: 10/16, 10/23, 10/30, 11/6, 11/13, 11/20, 12/4, 12/11
  - There will be additional staff from the aquarium and the high schools present

- Meeting with students 2-3 times per month to discuss their progress on their project. This can be accomplished via Skype, Google Chat/Hangouts, Facetime, or in person.

- Being available to answer students’ questions via email or telephone.

- Being available to provide feedback on the students’ project components (abstracts, posters, print pieces, etc) throughout the school year.
  - There will be two dinner meetings hosted in the Spring, February 1-5 and April 13th, to touch base on the progress of your group’s project and their effort to identify stakeholders.

This program could not exist without the scientific and educational communities' willingness to open its doors to our students. We appreciate your support, and look forward to partnering with you!

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