



PRESS RELEASE

SAN ELIJO JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY HOSTING YOUNG FEMALE SCIENTISTS

Cardiff-by-the-Sea, July 2012: The San Elijo Joint Powers Authority (SEJPA) and the J. Craig Venter Institute's (JCVI) DiscoverGenomics! Science Education Program hosted the commencement of a San Diego Science Alliance **Better Education for Women in Science and Engineering** (BE WiSE) Summer Academy on July 16th 2012 at the SEJPA facility. This innovative program, running at JCVI for the first time, has selected 12 highly talented young women from across San Diego County to participate in a weeklong science program focused on researching and understanding solutions to water and public health challenges using microbiology and metagenomic tools.

BE WiSE participants met with SEJPA senior staff and JCVI's Assistant Professor, Dr. Orianna Bretschger, to learn about wastewater treatment and the environmental importance of water pollution control, water recycling, and local water sustainability issues. Following the SEJPA tour, BE WiSE participants crossed the street to the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy to meet with renowned Oceanographer Dr. Elizabeth Venrick of Scripps Institution of Oceanography, and the San Elijo Lagoon Conservancy staff to learn more about impacts of water pollution and mitigation processes. As a part of this activity, the students took field samples from the lagoon and brought them back to JCVI to explore the microbial diversity in the lagoon and build a better understanding about the roles microbes play in water recycling.

"Our team at the J. Craig Venter Institute's DiscoverGenomics! Science Education Program is very excited to work with this group of talented young women to foster a greater understanding of, and appreciation for, science and engineering," said Dr. Bretschger. "We're fortunate to have an excellent support network internally at JCVI, and externally with the San Diego Science Alliance and the San Elijo Joint Powers Authority, so that we can make the extremely important study of water quality available to the young women who joined us."

"Water is an issue of global importance, but solutions often percolate up from the local level through inspired minds in the field of science and engineering," said Teresa Barth, Chair of the SEJPA's Board of Directors. "At San Elijo, we collaborate on water quality and recycling projects with other agencies, non-profits, research institutions and business whenever possible. We're honored to do our part to support the next generation of female scientific leaders by hosting the kickoff event for the BE WiSE Summer Academy."

For more information about the JCVI DiscoverGenomic! Science Education Program, please contact Heather Kowalski at hkowalski@jcv.org. For more information about the SDSA BeWise Program, please contact Patricia Winter at patriciawinter09@gmail.com. For more information about the SEJPA and its water quality improvement projects, please contact Mike Thornton at thornton@sejpa.org.

The San Elijo Joint Powers Authority (SEJPA) protects the water quality of the ocean by treating and disposing of wastewater for the Solana Beach, Cardiff, Olivenhain and Rancho Santa Fe communities. SEJPA owns and operates the San Elijo Water Reclamation Facility on the north side of the San Elijo Lagoon in Cardiff by the Sea. The agency operates a recycled water utility that provides approximately 1,200 acre-feet of recycled water annually for landscaping, golf courses and businesses to the City of Del Mar, the San Dieguito Water District and the Santa Fe Irrigation District.

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