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22-Feb-2006

Contact: Jane Doran Salomon
jsalomon@ashg.org
301-634-7308
[American Society of Human Genetics](http://www.ashg.org)

Geneticists bring their passion to US classrooms on DNA Day April 25th

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Over 1,200 genetic scientists, clinicians, counselors and advocates are putting the pedal to the metal by volunteering their time to be part of the American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) mentor network. They will be teaching genetics throughout local schools districts (grades K through 12) all over the country on April 25, 2006, National DNA day. In addition to visiting classrooms, many of these mentors will be reading and judging scores of essays submitted by high school students across the country. The essay contest encourages students to think about the future of genetics and what they might study one day if they were a scientist. Winning students will be given a monetary award and publication of their essay on the ASHG website. For more information on the essay contest, please visit www.ashg.org. Winners will be announced on DNA day.

ASHG has a long history of providing educational opportunities for students and science and biology teachers "but actually visiting schools in their neighborhoods brings the science and the passion to classrooms" according to Dr. Joann Boughman, Executive Vice President of the ASHG. "These scientists are committed to the idea that learning genetics must start in kindergarten as it is a subject that every citizen has a need to understand as it involves their own lives and health. In addition, the genetics research community needs future scientists and what better way than to tap the very classrooms which hold the keys to the future."

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The ASHG, founded in 1948, is the primary professional membership organization for human geneticists in the Americas. The nearly 8,000 members include researchers, academicians, clinicians, laboratory practice professionals, genetic counselors, nurses and others involved in or with a special interest in human genetics.

For more information on the essay contest contact Dr. Kenna Shaw, ASHG Director of Education at kshaw@ashg.org.