***AcademiCast* Transcript**
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Butler: What's the moon look like in your part of the world?

Hello everyone, I'm Kristina Butler and this is *AcademiCast*, brought to you by Texas Tech University.

That is the question students involved in the MOON project—which stands for More Observation of Nature—are asked, and their answers are shared with other students who live in different parts of the world. The MOON project is housed in Texas Tech's College of Education, which in collaboration with other universities, connects 4th through 8th grade students via the Internet to show them there is much more to our world than the communities they live in and offers a broadened view of science. Dr. Walter Smith in the College of Education has worked on the MOON project for more than 10 years, and he says the project really teaches more than science and math.

Smith: *The teachers tell me that when the students read the writing of other students and we organize it in such a way that each student gets the observations from nine other students. Those nine students are spread out as far as we can around the world. They use those observations then to look for these global patterns—the idea that the moon is on the right side, left side depending on which hemisphere. The students begin to realize that maybe they could have written better themselves to help their nine colleagues better understand what was going on.*

Butler: By offering students a hands-on learning experience, teachers who use the MOON project hope to increase their students' interest in a wide array of subjects.

Texas Tech is looking for Texas middle school math and science teachers who want to earn a master's degree—for free. The Middle School Math and Science Understanding by Design program was funded in December 2008 by a three million dollar grant from the Greater Texas Foundation. It has helped teachers receive their master's degrees all while helping them teach math and science more effectively. The program will accept applications through March, and more information can be found at today.ttu.edu.

The Vietnam Center and Archive at Texas Tech will present a guest lecture series throughout 2011 featuring presentations on specific aspects of the Vietnam War, including the impact on American policies, society and culture. Again, more information can be found on our website: today.ttu.edu.

Our next integrated scholar interview is with Dr. Ron Kendall, who is a world-renowned expert in the field of environmental toxicology. Here's Provost Bob Smith with a deeper look into Dr. Kendall's work and accomplishments.

Smith: If you have followed news about the environmental impacts of last year's catastrophic oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, then, you've probably heard the name Ron Kendall. Dr. Kendall's passion for his area of expertise developed at a young age and has continued to grow throughout his career.

Kendall: *When I first became interested in environmental toxicology, we had not even coined the term environmental toxicology. As a child, I had an opportunity to be with a grandfather that instilled in me an interest for the environment and an environmental ethic. In other words, we pollute the river, the fish are gone, and the environment is impacted - just as simple as that. That instilled in me a lifelong interest in environmental issues, and how we as human beings treat the environment. And what we've learned, through my career, is that good environmental protection is good economic development. In other words, you destroy your water or air quality then you have a hard time economically developing, so to speak.*

Smith: Dr. Kendall heads up the Texas Tech Institute of Environmental Toxicology and Human Health along with the Department of Environmental Toxicology. Working with faculty colleagues and graduate students at Texas Tech, Dr. Kendall's team participates in research that has attracted worldwide media attention in the Gulf Coast after the oil spill. As a result of their research, Dr. Kendall was even asked to testify in front of the United States Senate regarding Texas Tech's research efforts in the deep water horizon oil spill, as well as the need for future oil spill research.

Kendall: *Our work in the Gulf, related to the oil spill, actually brought in the world press. This was a highly visible event from an environmental perspective. Chancellor Hance, from the very beginning, asked the institute to get involved. Of course we were already involved and that's what we do. We understand how to assess the response of wildlife to those kinds of events. We had a lot of work going on at the Gulf, in the Gulf, and we were also doing a lot of work in the laboratory, as we are now looking at the oil and how it effects various species of fish and wildlife and also the heavy use of dispersants—unprecedented use of dispersants in this oil spill and we had no information on their environmental toxicology, and when I say no information, I mean no information. When I testified before the United States Senate, we were able to get the environmental protection agency, through the question and answer series, to identify that no environmental toxicology research or data were available at the time of the use of dispersants—that decision was made. And of course, that's the kind of questions we ask to get answers to.*

Smith: In addition to his notable research, Dr. Kendall assists in the recruitment of students to Texas Tech to study environmental toxicology. As he'll tell recruits: environmental toxicology is a very promising field for job-placement and professional success.

Kendall: *Well I'd like to say, our environmental toxicology program at Texas Tech is rated among the best in the nation and the world. That's why the very top students come to us from all over the world and all over the nation. We got to that level by having a*

passion for excellence and having great faculty and great students. So, the number one thing I do is be a part of that process of attracting the best students. And then once they get here, they become involved in inner-disciplinary research teams and they learn how to collaborate, to work together in this still burgeoning field of environmental toxicology. I might add that in 30 years of mentoring students, job placement is still terrific. It doesn't matter if we're having a recession or not, these kinds of students are in high demand once they get out of here.

Smith: Dr. Kendall believes that for Texas Tech to attract the very best students from around the world, it is imperative that we provide outstanding resources and technologies. He also thinks that attracting the best students to Tech will be of significant help to the university on its path to Tier One status.

Kendall: *My other role is recruiting resources. It's a resource intense system. New equipment, new technologies are currently coming out and we have to stay on the forefront. So recruiting new resources and new resources for our students. Your top students require fellowships or they'll go somewhere else. The best students, just like for recruiting a football team, if you don't give them support then they're probably not gonna come her—the same thing for our students. We have to provide support and we get them here. It's a good business deal, as well as a good scientific deal, because those outstanding students participate in our large research grants, which creates research support for the university and in direct cost generates for the university. So it all works out. And great students need good stipends, help generate research, help generate indirect cost, helps the university reach Tier One. That's how it goes.*

Smith: Dr. Kendall has a deep passion for the field of environmental toxicology, as well as a deep commitment to the success of Texas Tech University. His internationally recognized research—his dedication to the recruitment and education of top students—and his service to the profession and our university community is what makes Dr. Ron Kendall a world-renowned integrated scholar. We congratulate and thank him for his efforts. Thanks for listening! I'm Bob Smith.

Butler: Thanks, Dr. Smith.

The latest issue of *All Things Texas Tech*, the academic journal for Texas Tech University, was released February 15.

The journal aims to provide an understanding of the world of higher education through reasoned essays, articles and other multimedia developed by Texas Tech administrators, faculty, staff, students and alumni.

Check out the articles, videos and photos for All Things Texas Tech on the provost's website, www.provost.ttu.edu.

I'm Kristina Butler for *AcademiCast*.