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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Southwood High School
Biotechnology Magnet Academy receives
\$100,000 of state-of-the-art science equipment**

The Biotechnology Magnet Academy located at Southwood High School unveiled new state-of-the-art science equipment in one of its classroom laboratories.

The \$100,000 worth of equipment was purchased as a result of gifts from a combination of seven individuals, corporations and foundations as part of a fundraising campaign coordinated by the Biomedical Research Foundation. The seven donors include the Douglas F. and Marion S. Attaway Foundation, the Charles T. Beard Foundation, Capital One Bank, The Committee of One Hundred, The Community Foundation of Shreveport-Bossier Douglas F. and Marion S. Attaway Charitable Income Trust Advised Fund, The Community Foundation of Shreveport-Bossier, and Dr. George A. Khoury.

The equipment purchased includes such items as: (8) Electrophoresis systems; (2) Centrifuges; (2) Inverted phase microscopes; (1) Autoclave; (8) Bacti-cinerators; and (2) temperature controlled storage cabinets.

Biotechnology Magnet Academy

According to Misty Davis, Biotechnology Magnet Academy Director, "This equipment will provide us with the opportunity to offer two new courses to Academy students. The courses are *Microbiology*; and *Molecular and Cellular Biology* which are both college level courses. We also appreciate the partnership we have developed with Louisiana State University in Shreveport who is supplying one of their science faculty to teach the Molecular and Cellular Biology course at Southwood.

Tony Giordano, Ph.D., Assistant Dean of Research and Business Development for LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport helped to design the curriculum and was an advisor on the equipment to be purchased for the labs. He noted "Microbiology and Molecular and Cellular Biology are introductory courses to biotechnology. Usually these subject areas are briefly reviewed in high school Biology courses. The Academy's accelerated approach of offering these two semester courses will put them significantly ahead of their peers."

Jack Sharp, Biomedical Research Foundation President whose organization raised the funds for the project noted, "We are very excited to be a part of the Biotechnology Magnet Academy. The Academy is a partnership among the Biomedical Research Foundation, Southwood High School, LSU Health Sciences Center in Shreveport, Louisiana State University-Shreveport; Centenary College; Caddo Parish Public Schools and participating local biotech companies. The partnership is committed to creating a competent, well-trained workforce necessary to successfully attract and retain biotechnology-based industry to north Louisiana."

The Biotechnology Magnet Academy began in 2006. The Academy curriculum is unique in that each grade incorporates intensive laboratory experience. The ninth grade focuses on physiology and anatomy; the tenth on microbiology; the eleventh on molecular and cellular biology; and the twelfth on research techniques capped off with an off-campus research internship experience.

Biotechnology Magnet Academy

“The generosity of donors to the Microbiology and Cell Labs provides yet more opportunity and growth for our young, aspiring student body. Many young adults are never presented with the resources and tools necessary to advance their interests and skills. What a rewarding position for our school, our students, and our community to be in,” said Ken Wood, Southwood High School Principal.

Southwood High School is no stranger to the commitment of providing students greater and richer learning opportunities. The introduction of innovative hands-on programs at Southwood has been a way to provide students with unique experiences in the fields of biotechnology, medicine and other technology areas. Programs include Environmental and Spatial Technology (EAST) Program, Biotechnology Magnet Academy, For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST) Robotics, and The Math, Science & Technology Program (MST).

For more information please contact Ken Wood, Misty Davis, Annetta Garner or Jeff Roberts at 318-686-9512.

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