



FRED HUTCH
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Out of the classroom and into a lab coat

After the school year ends, students, parents and educators embark on a summer of relaxation and weekend getaways, but some teachers are putting in the extra credit to teach and inspire future generations about life saving research.

SEATTLE, WASH – Washington biology teachers are working alongside scientists and researchers at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center this summer for the 26th year of the [Science Education Partnership \(SEP\)](#).

During the two and a half weeks of the program, teachers will work on molecular biology techniques such as DNA extraction, gel electrophoresis, and bacterial transformation and will also participate in lab research with a mentor scientist.

Jeanne Chowning, a former biology teacher at Juanita High School in Kirkland first participated in the SEP Program in 1995. That summer, she worked in the Fred Hutch lab of virologist Dr. Maxine Liniak studying viruses. For the next two summers, Chowning returned to Fred Hutch to learn from other scientists in the Torok-Storb lab in the Clinical Research division.

“I remember 20 years ago, sitting in the labs at Fred Hutch and aspiring to find ways to bring the excitement of research into teaching,” Chowning said. “Fred Hutch conducts world-class scientific research, and I loved being involved with the center.”

While at Fred Hutch, Chowning worked alongside scientists trying to understand which genes are “turned on” in cancerous cells. After her time at the Hutch, Chowning started Western Washington’s first biotechnology program at Juanita High School, which is now in its 21st year. Chowning returned to Fred Hutch in 2016 to take over as SEP Director when Dr. Nancy Hutchinson, one of the programs founders, decided to retire after 25 years at the helm.

“It all really does come full-circle,” said Chowning. “After my time at Fred Hutch, I was able to grow professionally and engage students in science in new ways. I’m thankful to be leading a program that had a profound impact on my teaching career.”

For 26 years, scientists and researchers at Fred Hutch have supported over 500 biology teachers across Washington and impacted over 400,000 Washington students through SEP.

Inspirus Credit Union donated \$10,000 in 2017 to purchase equipment to support the SEP Program.

“We believe in the transformative power of learning,” said Inspirus Credit Union Vice President of Marketing Sherry Lotze. “The research that’s happening at Fred Hutch is fascinating, and the opportunity this provides for teachers to learn from and bring back to their classroom is monumental in the lives of their students.”

“We’re so grateful for the support of Inspirus Credit Union so that our program can continue to flourish and grow,” said Chowning. “In the next five years of the program, we hope to develop new cutting-edge resources, reach more teachers, and continue to have a large impact on Washington classrooms.”

About Inspirus Credit Union

Founded in 1936 by a Seattle math and journalism teacher, Inspirus serves 80,000 members across Washington who share a passion for education. With \$1.1 billion in assets, Inspirus operates branches in Seattle, Spokane, and Lynnwood. Its philanthropy model includes education-giveback programs that allow members to direct charitable contributions to schools in their communities. Inspirus team members donate upwards of 1,000 volunteer hours each year in support of education. Inspirus Credit Union is a 2017 winner of Puget Sound Business Journal's Corporate Champion Awards, honoring their contributions to education. For more information, visit inspirusCU.org.

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