2008

Alumni Public Service Award (2008)

Susan Riechert

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Public Service Award

Presented by the UT National Alumni Association

Dr. SUSAN Riechert, professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, has been involved in numerous outreach activities, but the most successful and far-reaching is her “Biology in a Box” project. Biology in a Box is an innovative approach to teaching life sciences within the curriculum at all grade levels. Each biology box contains exercises and associated materials that introduce students to the scientific methods and math skills used to explore and understand nature. In addition to developing the boxes, Riechert holds workshops for teachers to train them in the boxes’ use. Teacher clamor to get a place in Riechert’s workshops, and with good reason: The classrooms where teachers are trained to use the boxes saw anywhere from a 2- to 12-percent increase in standardized test scores. Currently, Biology in a Box has more than 600 boxes in 31 school systems across the state.