

POINT LOMA OFFERS INNOVATIVE NEW MASTER'S DEGREE IN GENERAL BIOLOGY

Point Loma Nazarene University is unveiling a unique master's degree program in general biology, beginning summer 2006. Designed with middle and high school science teachers in mind, the program combines online courses during the academic year with modules held at Point Loma during the summer. Another teacher-friendly feature of the program is that educators can enroll in modules for professional development without being enrolled in the master's program.

Students who do opt to earn a master's degree can choose between an M.A. and an M.S. Both options require biology and science education coursework. M.A. students take additional science education research and elective classes, and M.S. students complete a research-based thesis on an aspect of teaching or learning biology in a classroom setting. The two choices allow science teachers and others in the program to have a hand in customizing their own advanced education while ensuring that all students learn

not only about biology but also about pedagogical challenges involved in science education.

PLNU professors like Dr. Dianne Anderson, director of the new master's program, Dr. Dawne Page, and Dr. Kerry Fulcher have special insights into the need for a graduate option like this because of Point Loma's involvement with local educators. For example, Perspectives on Science (POS) invites middle and high school teachers to the campus once a month to hear prominent scientists talk about recent research and provides an opportunity for local teachers to interact and share their needs with PLNU faculty.

"We saw a need for this new master's program in light of what's available right now," said Dr. Page, professor of biology at PLNU. "Most master's programs [for science teachers] are M.A.'s geared toward education content or M.S.'s geared toward research. A science teacher in middle or high school needs both."

LOST BOYS: FINDING WAYS TO MEET NEEDS

by Anita Palmer

When Isaac Amol looked into John's face, he saw himself. John is a 9-year-old orphan in war-torn south Sudan. His parents and siblings in the village of Wanyjok were killed by northern militias when John was an infant.

Amol is one of PLNU's "Lost Boys of Sudan," the approximately 17,000 children who were wrenched from their villages in the mid-1980s during a frenzy of ethnic cleansing. Nearly 100 settled in San Diego County about five years ago.

For two weeks this summer, Amol went back to Sudan with five other Lost Boys on a trip organized by Aid Sudan, a Houston-based Christian charity. He saw his two brothers for the first time since fleeing his village. His mother couldn't make the 30-hour walk needed to reach him, but they spoke by phone.

Apart from that emotional experience, Amol was overwhelmed with the needs of Sudanese children,



Isaac Amol and John Deng

Amol Brothers: Aluat, Ngang and Isaac.

300 alone in the area of Wanyjok. He already is dreaming of building an orphanage for young John and the others. He said the most immediate needs are the most basic: food, shelter and clothing.

He and his cousin, another San Diego area Lost Boy who was also on the summer trip to Sudan, plan to go back again in December, taking whatever supplies they can.

"I see myself again when I see [the kids]. I have to do something. I want to share the love of God with them," said Amol.