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In the Spotlight: Texas Institute for Applied Environmental Research (TIAER)

September, 2008 – New Beginning!

Although TIAER has been around a long time (since 1991), has 35 staff plus a half dozen student workers, and averages \$3.5 million of research each year, most Tarleton staff don't know much about it.

Uh, TIAER?? Oh, yeah, ok, I think I might have heard of that? Don't ask me what they do, ok?!

The TIAER staff's low profile on campus might have something to do with being spread across three buildings (Hydrology, Davis Hall, and a ten year old "temporary" building behind Hydrology). Or with their hours: when samples need to be collected or tested at 2 a.m. Sunday morning, someone from TIAER is leaving for south Texas or arriving at the lab. Or what they do might just seem too different from what the rest of us do: they collect samples from rivers and creeks, test the samples for a wide variety of pollutants ranging from bacteria to phosphorus and nitrogen, and use that test data to draw educated conclusions about what's happening and develop mathematical models to predict what might happen in the future. TIAER then makes recommendations to decision makers like the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).

"GOOD SCIENCE CREATES GOOD SOLUTIONS."

DAN HUNTER – TIAER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

on international research and policy analysis. In the coming year, TIAER's national work – for example, a study of the feasibility of a nitrogen trading tool to allow water quality trading (like the carbon credit trading that industries engage in to manage air pollution) in the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland – will be balanced by work in Alberta, Canada.

EDUCATION. TIAER staff have bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in fields like biology, chemistry, economics, environmental science, hydrology and wildlife/fishery science. Their skills include contract management; data and information technology management; designing, operating and maintaining monitoring equipment; grant writing; graphics; developing and accurately following laboratory procedures; policy analysis; and project management. TIAER is especially proud of its staff who are Tarleton grads. They may leave for a while after graduation, but they often return home to Tarleton to work for TIAER or in other departments.



TIAER HIGHLIGHTS IN FUTURE STAFF COUNCIL NEWSLETTERS

October: Tim Jones and Jeff Stroebel explain how they collect and prepare water samples for the lab. and does. **January:** Dr. Ali Saleh discusses what an economic model is and does. **November:** Mark Murphy describes work at TIAER's NELAP **February:** Suresh Katuri, Don Gosdin, and Dianne Swanson

(National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program) work behind the scenes. accredited laboratory. **March:** Sharlene Shigley and the administrative staff keep **December:** Dr. Anne McFarland explains how TIAER decides everything humming along. what all the data means.