

The LSUHSC Department of Genetics celebrated DNA Day at the Audubon Zoo on April 15, 2011. The goal of the event was to make the general public aware of the importance of DNA and genetics in our everyday lives. Everyone was encouraged to participate in the activities, which were both fun and educational. Children, parents, and teachers benefited from learning interactive projects that they could use at home or in the classroom. Dr. Fern Tsien directed the event. Also on hand to instruct the participants were: LSUHSC faculty Dr. Udai Pandey and Dr. Sunyoung Kim, recent Department of Genetics graduate Dr. Sammeta Vamsee Raju, graduate students Aditi Iyengar, Nikki Nguyen, Jacob Loupe, Rebecca Buckley, Elisa Ledet, and Waleed Elsegeiny, University of New Orleans student and LSUHSC Department of Genetics technician Bradley Howe, and Xavier University research associate Grace Ledet.



Participants learned how to isolate DNA from strawberries, a simple experiment which demonstrates how all living things are made up of cells, inside which DNA is found. Students also learned about the structure of the DNA double helix by making their own miniature DNA model they were able to take home. Coloring pages of animal heredity and traits involved the genetics of some of the animals found in the Audubon Zoo. Fruitflies were brought in from Dr. Pandey's lab to demonstrate the use of *Drosophila* in genetic research. Educational material was made available explaining the use of genetics for preserving endangered species, where genes come from, how DNA can be found inside cells, and the impact of genetics on your health.

More DNA Day Photos

