



COURTESY PHOTO

Pictured are students mixing different combinations for their own personalized "slime."

Chemistry Outreach Program visits South to promote science knowledge

Special to the H-T

This Halloween, students in Jody Duncan's Integrated Chemistry and Physics classes at Bloomington High School South were visited by research students from Indiana University's Department of Chemistry.

Members from Professor Amar Flood's research group led the class in discussions on polymers and an experiment in making multi-colored and fluorescent slime. Flood, along with chemistry graduate students Yuran Hua, Kumar Parimal and Eddie Witlicki, assisted undergraduate senior Joe Meisel, who designed the program as his Capstone Project for the Leadership, Ethics, and Social Action (LESA) minor offered at IU.

The goal of the project was to advocate scientific literacy and awareness among high school students who do not necessarily plan on pursuing careers in science.

Students were introduced to the concept of polymers, long chains of molecules bonded together that permeate our everyday lives in the form of plastics, synthetic fibers and

nearly all other synthetic materials imaginable.

By cross-linking polymer chains together in a hands-on experiment to create slime, students were able to investigate the properties of polymers first-hand.

Following the experiment, students participated in a discussion relating polymers to the energy crisis and the need for all citizens to possess a knowledge and awareness of contemporary scientific issues.

The project was funded by the Chemistry Outreach Program, a division of the IU Department of Chemistry that seeks to promote chemistry and science at IU and in the Bloomington Community.

Jody Duncan, chairperson of the Bloomington High School South Science Department, was impressed with the success of the project and expressed hope for further collaboration between Indiana University and BHS South.

The flood research group and IU's Nanoscience Center look toward additional outreach programs that connect IU's science resources with the community.