

Stanford Education School To Offer Loan Forgiveness

Many law schools forgive the tuition loans they make to students who accept public-service jobs, and the practice has caught on with some high-end business schools at Harvard and Stanford universities.

But until now, even the most expensive education schools have not offered such a break, say officials at Stanford University's school of education.

Stanford alumna Judy Avery has changed that with a \$10 million gift that the university has matched to establish a \$20 million loan-forgiveness program at the university's education school.

Ms. Avery, a 1959 Stanford graduate, chairs the Durfee Foundation in Santa Monica, Calif. Her mother, who along with her father started the foundation, was a public schoolteacher.

By significantly reducing aspiring teachers' postgraduation debt burden, the program aims to encourage students—especially those from low-income communities—to choose and stick with teaching.

Stanford trains K-12 teachers mainly in a one-year postgraduate program leading to a master's degree. The total cost of that year can climb as high as \$65,000, according to the school's figures.

"We hope more people will open up to the possibilities" of teaching because of the program, said Rebecca Tseng Smith, an associate dean.

Under the program, half of a recipient's loan will be canceled after two years of teaching in a public school and the other half after a second two years. Students who go on to teach in private schools in underserved communities will also be considered.

Ms. Smith said she thought the loans were likely to amount to \$10,000 to \$15,000 in aid per person, since just about all the 90 students in a teacher education class would be eligible.

—BESS KELLER

'Rocket Festival' to Lift Off In New Mexico This Week

A competition that bills itself as "the world's first true rocket festival" will play host this week to students from across the country—and others watching via the Internet.

The X-Prize Cup, a competition in its second year that brings together private designers of space technology, will take place in Las Cruces, N.M., Oct. 20-21. As many as 6,000 students are expected to attend the event. Teachers who sign up their classes get a teachers' guide and student workbooks on the history and future of space exploration; other information is available online.

For students who attend in person, there will be displays and demonstrations of equipment, and presentations from experts in astronomy. The event also includes various competitions sponsored by NASA, in which private manufacturers of space equipment compete for up to \$2 million in prizes. The X-Prize Cup is sponsored by the X-Prize Foundation, a nonprofit organization that promotes space exploration through private entrepreneurship, and the state of New Mexico.

Those who can't attend can watch both days via a live Webcast, at www.xprizecup.com. Teacher and student guides and other educational materials are available at www.xprizecup.com/education.php?sub=education resources.

—SEAN CAVANAGH

Web Site Offers Lessons Drawn From the Movies

For years, James A. Frieden was fond of watching the movies he most admired—"Gandhi" and "Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Learned to Love the Bomb," to name just two—with

his three sons, now grown, not just as entertainment, but for the lessons they offered about civil rights, the Cold War, and other topics.

Mr. Frieden and his wife, Deborah W. Elliott, eventually came to believe there was a demand among parents, as well as school officials, for more structured

lessons, and character development, through film.

About a decade ago, the couple created "Teach With Movies," an Internet-based service that offers ideas for lessons in history, science, health, ethics, and other subjects to teachers and other subscribers. Teachers have used movies in classes for years to reinforce lessons; the Web site, Mr. Frieden says, is designed to help them organize and expand on those discussions.

Subscribers pay \$11.99 a year. They receive links to 270 movies, from such classics as

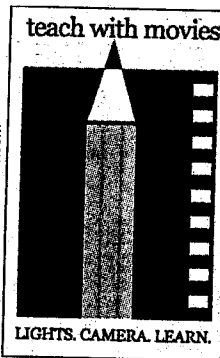
"To Kill a Mockingbird" to contemporary works like "October Sky." Links are provided to articles on historical and other relevant topics covered in the films, to Web sites, and to analyses of the movies. The movies are screened for content, and warnings are included on the site about sex and violence.

The site has about 7,000 subscribers, 80 percent of them teachers, Mr. Frieden said. He and Ms. Elliott gather suggestions for films from subscribers.

Mr. Frieden, a lawyer, has no direct connection to K-12 schools, except for occasional volunteer stints. He hardly considers himself a movie junkie. "I know more about the stars that my mother loved," he confessed, "Greta Garbo, Clark Gable—than I do about movie stars today."

The Web site is www.teachwithmovies.org.

—S.C.



Courtesy of teachwithmovies.com

Teachers can use the Web site to expand their lessons.