

Media Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Investigates Science Struggles in Schools in 1st Comprehensive Documentary about
the State of Science Education in California**

San Francisco, CA, October 17, 2008- *QUEST*, KQED's local science series takes an unprecedented comprehensive look at the state of science education in California in a special 30 minute episode, ***Under the Microscope: Science Struggles in Schools*** airing at **7:30pm Tuesday, October 28 on KQED Channel 9.**

California ranks second-lowest in the U.S. in fourth and eighth grade science achievement, according to a [recent study by the University of California Berkeley's Lawrence Hall of Science](#). Most don't realize that 80 percent of Bay Area elementary school teachers spend less than one hour a week teaching science--half the national average.

Since a large part of California's economy is devoted to technology, it is vital that California get its students up to speed. How bad is the problem? And what are schools and informal science education organizations doing to fill the gap?

From the unintended consequences of a 1970s civil rights court case, to passage of Prop 13, to the thawing of the Cold War, *QUEST* investigates the historical forces which have created a public education system that spends less than the national average per pupil, despite the fact that California's economy is the largest in the U.S.

QUEST also meets innovative teachers and discovers creative methods being employed to get kids caught up. *QUEST* goes into the classrooms of Joyce Craig, a third-grade teacher at Henry Haight Elementary School in Alameda, whose students are studying the geology of the Earth, and Dr. Charles Martin, advanced placement biology teacher at Hayward High School. *QUEST* meets Dr. Martin's special assistant, former student Kristina Minor who is part of a program called Calteach which encourages University of California science and math undergrads to go into teaching. *QUEST* tags along with the Girl Scouts as they discover astrobiology and build robots at NASA Ames. *QUEST* also uncovers other innovative programs that are improving educator's science teaching skills and getting kids excited about science.

Launched in February 2007, *QUEST* is KQED's largest multimedia project. Going beyond its weekly television broadcast, *QUEST* features weekly **radio reports**, free **educator resources** and a dynamic website that includes: exclusive **web extras**, **flickr photos**, local science-based hikes called **Explorations**, and a daily **science blog** written by Northern California scientists. *QUEST* also works with **16 community partners**, including the California Academy of Sciences, the Chabot Space and Science Center, the Exploratorium, the Lawrence Hall of Science and the Monterey Bay Aquarium, to bring audiences closer to the Bay Area's world-class science centers, museums and the natural beauty of its open spaces. For more information about the series visit: www.kqed.org/quest