

March 2, 2011

For Immediate Release

MVCTC Tech Prep Biotechnology Students Kick Off the Big Read

Tech Prep biotechnology students from Miami Valley Career Technology Center (MVCTC) met with students from Springfield High School on Wednesday, March 2 to kick off this year's Big Read at Sinclair Community College. Students discussed this year's community book, Rebecca Skloot's bestseller *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, the story of the woman who unknowingly gave the world HeLa cells, one of the most important scientific developments of the last century.

Biotechnology teachers Bev Wolfe, MVCTC, and Rachel Sanders, Springfield, assigned the book and set up a blog so that students could discuss their reading across school boundaries. According to Bev Wolfe, "At first we (teachers) posted questions and students responded. But soon, the students asked to post their own questions, taking the discussion in new directions. They took the project far beyond what we had imagined."

At their Sinclair meeting, students discussed history, writing, and bioethics, and got a taste of the college classroom. Professors Marigrace Ryan (Biology), Jamey Dunham (English), and Gary Courts (Biology) took questions from students and provided new insights into the book.

Springfield and MVCTC were joined by students from Kettering Fairmont for much of the project, although Fairmont students were unable to attend the final discussion.

The connective tissue for the group is the Miami Valley Tech Prep Consortium. Designed to create college pathways for career-technical students, Tech Prep builds teams among Sinclair and high school faculties.

Other area high schools with Tech Prep Biotechnology programs include Centerville, Greene County Career Center, Ohio Hi-Point, Ponitz, Stebbins, Talawanda, Warren County Career Center, and Wayne.

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