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M. A. Henry Consulting, LLC to Evaluate Innovative Grant Bringing GIS and Bio-Imaging Tools to the Classroom

ST. LOUIS, MO – August 10, 2007 – M. A. Henry Consulting, LLC, the St. Louis area’s leading evaluator of externally funded education projects, has been selected as the evaluator for the *Maps in Medicine* program, an \$750,000 educational grant led by the University of Missouri – Columbia funded by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

The project will develop innovative, high tech mapping tools and concepts to be piloted in three Missouri school districts. The integrated curriculum will teach students fundamental concepts of human health, biology and medical sciences. Columbia Public Schools, Normandy School District and Parkway School District have signed on as partners in the project. The Missouri Botanical Garden also will collaborate in the geospatial and biological imaging technologies to be developed by the project.

“The basic notion is very simple: young people have a sense of direction and navigation that we wish to employ in helping them to understand how cells develop and how those cells navigate in three-dimensional space as tissues and how organizations are patterned during development,” said William Folk, principal investigator of the project, professor of biochemistry and senior associate dean for research in the MU School of Medicine.

According to Katharine Kostiuk of the university, modules on Mapping Health and Mapping Cell Fate “will introduce students to the role of vectors in the transmission of avian influenza virus and how movement of the avian vectors and spread of the virus are monitored at state, regional and global levels. In the Mapping Cell Fate portion, students will learn how cells get instructions to maintain or change their properties, or their ‘fates,’ and what health problems occur when these instructions are challenged by genetic mutations and pathogens such as the avian influenza virus.”

The educational evaluation and research portion of the project will be led by M.A. Henry Consulting President, Martha A. Henry, EdD, and company CEO Keith S. Murray. Their combined experience in education, curriculum development and public health research will add to the rigor of determining the extent to which the project is successful in its ambitious goals. ###