

collaborative organizations and fulfillment of listener requests.

"DNA and Behavior: Is Our Fate Written in Our Genes?" is the pilot documentary for the series, scheduled for release in early 1996. The show will help the lay person understand and evaluate recent research in the area of behavioral genetics. Recently, we've seen news media reports on newly discovered genetic factors being related to behaviors such as alcoholism, mental illness, sexual orientation and aggression. This program will look at several examples of these "genetic factors" and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of various methodologies involved in the research; and introduce such controversial issues as the re-emergence of a eugenics movement based on theoretical suppositions drawn from recent work in behavioral genetics.

With information linking major diseases such as breast cancer, colon cancer, and arteriosclerosis to genetic factors, new dangers in public perception emerge. Many people who hear about them mistakenly conclude that these diseases can now be easily diagnosed and even cured. On the other end of the public perception spectrum, unfounded fears of extreme, and highly unlikely, consequences also appear. Will society now genetically engineer whole generations of people with "designer genes" offering more "desirable physical qualities"? The *DNA Files* will ground public understanding of these issues in reality. "DNA and the Law" reviews the scientific basis for genetic fingerprinting and looks at cases of alleged genetic discrimination by insurance companies, employers and others. This program also looks at disputes over paternity, intellectual property rights, the commercialization of genetic information, informed consent and privacy issues. Other shows include "The Search for a Breast Cancer Gene," "Prenatal Genetic Testing and Treatment," "Evolution and Genetic Diversity," "Sickle-Cell Disease and Thalassemia: Hope for a Cure," and "Theology, Mythology and Human Genetic Research."

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### **Communicating Science in Plain Language: The Science+ Literacy for Health: Human Genome Project**

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Recent literacy surveys have found that a large number of adults lack the skills to bring meaning to much of what is written about science. This, in effect, denies them access to vital information about their health and well-being. To ad-

dress this need, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) is developing a 2-year project to provide low-literate adults with the background knowledge necessary to address the social, ethical, and legal implications of the Human Genome Project.

With its **Science + Literacy for Health: Human Genome Project**, AAAS is using its existing network of adult education providers and volunteer science and health professionals to pursue the following overall objectives: (1) to develop new materials for adult literacy classes, including a high-interest reading book and accompanying curriculum, an implementation framework, a short video providing background information on genetics, a database of resources, and fact sheets that will assist other organizations and researchers in preparing easy-to-read materials about the human genome project, and (2) to develop and conduct a campaign to disseminate project materials to libraries and community organizations carrying out literacy programs throughout the United States.

Because not every low-literate adult is enrolled in a literacy class, our model for helping scientists communicate in simple language will have impact beyond classrooms and learning centers. In preliminary contacts, community groups providing health services have indicated that the proposed materials are not only desirable but needed; indeed such groups often receive requests for information on heredity and genetics. The module developed by AAAS should enable other medical and scientific organizations to communicate more effectively with economically disadvantaged populations, which often include a large number of low-literate individuals.

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### **The Community College Initiative**

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The Community College Initiative prepares community college students for work in biotechnology. A combined effort of Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) and the California Community Colleges, we aim to develop mechanisms to encourage students to pursue science studies, to participate in forefront laboratory research, and to gain work experience. The initiative is structured to upgrade the skills of students and their instructors through four components.

**Summer Student Workshops:** Four weeks summer residential programs for students who have completed the first year of the biotechnology academic program. Ethical, legal