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MATERIALS SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS RESEARCH HONORED AT NATION'S PREMIER HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE COMPETITION

2009 Siemens Competition Regional Winners Announced at The University of Texas at Austin; Will Move on to National Finals for Chance at \$100,000

Peter Hu Wins Top Individual Prize; Sean Karson, Dan Liu and Kevin Chen Win Top Team Prize

AUSTIN, TX, Nov. 14, 2009 — Research projects in the areas of materials science and mathematics scored top marks this evening, as Peter Hu of Denton, Texas and the team of Sean Karson of Winter Park, Florida, Dan Liu of Austin, Texas and Kevin Chen of Missouri City, Texas received the highest honors at the Region Two Finals of the 2009 Siemens Competition in Math, Science & Technology, the nation's premier high school science competition.

Tonight's winners will receive thousands of dollars in college scholarships and be invited to compete at the National Finals in New York City on December 3-7, where the winners of six regional competitions across the United States will vie for scholarships ranging from \$10,000 to the top prize of \$100,000. The Siemens Competition, a signature program of the Siemens Foundation, is administered by the College Board.

"These students have just earned their place among the nation's greatest high school scientists," said James Whaley, President of the Siemens Foundation, based in Iselin, New Jersey. "Each year, the students' work becomes more impressive, and in a record-setting year such as this one, their achievements become even more outstanding. We are proud to welcome them into our family of Siemens Scholars and look forward to their participation at the national finals in New York City."

The students presented their research this weekend to a panel of judges from The University of Texas at Austin, host of the Siemens Competition Region Two Finals.

Individual Winner

Peter Hu, a senior at the Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science in Denton, Texas, won the individual category and a \$3,000 college scholarship for his materials science project that aimed to develop a novel and biologically compatible material for protein drug delivery. While similar delivery systems for therapeutic proteins are known in scientific literature, many of these materials were found to be carcinogenic. Mr. Hu's research, titled *Novel Thermogelling Dispersions of Polymer Nanoparticles for Controlled Drug Delivery*, focused on an alternative FDA-approved material to mimic the behavior of these previous delivery systems, effectively avoiding prior toxicity issues.

“While all of the projects were very impressive today, Mr. Hu’s research was successful on many levels,” said Dr. Christopher Bielawski, Associate Professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at The University of Texas at Austin. “This research project established a key proof of concept in the laboratory and the materials presented are poised for examination in living systems. Mr. Hu’s work is very advanced and comparable to that of a second or third year graduate student; with minimal tweaks, this research project stands an excellent chance at being published in a top-tier scientific journal and will likely make quite a splash in many scientific communities.”

Mr. Hu is a senior who aspires to one day lead a research team at a university or facility, such as the National Cancer Institute. Currently, he is the Vice President of the Junior Engineering Technical Society, and is organizing a science demonstration team in order to promote interest in math and science among elementary and middle school students. Mr. Hu is also a member of his school’s Research Organization.

Both of Mr. Hu’s parents are physicists, spurring his interest in science at a young age. In addition to his academic pursuits, Mr. Hu plays piano and violin, as well as basketball and table tennis in his free time. His mentor for this research project was Professor Liping Tang of the Department of Bioengineering at The University of Texas at Arlington.

Team Winners

Sean Karson, a senior at Trinity Preparatory High School in Winter Park, Florida; Dan Liu, a junior at the Liberal Arts and Science Academy High School in Austin, Texas; and Kevin Chen, a junior at William P. Clements High School in Sugar Land, Texas, won the team category and will share a \$6,000 college scholarship for their mathematics project entitled *Relating Missing and Decycling Edges in Directed Graphs*. The team’s mathematics project has the potential to increase efficiency in real world networks by establishing an upper bound on the minimum number of connections that must be removed to destroy all cyclic pathways in systems like the World Wide Web and transcontinental trade routes.

“The team’s work was truly impressive in that it focused on a topic in pure mathematics,” said Dr. Haskell Rosenthal, John T. Stuart III Centennial Professor Emeritus in Mathematics at The University of Texas at Austin. “With new and delicate techniques, they have advanced the infrastructure and knowledge of graph theory by providing better bounds, which is of fundamental importance to the mathematics community. Their depth of knowledge was remarkable, and their work was on the same level of that of a Ph.D.”

Mr. Karson is a senior who has received Excellence Awards for Honors Computer Programming C++, Graphics I, Honors Chemistry, Honors Precalculus, AP JAVA and AP Chemistry. He has also received the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Math & Science Award, and is recognized as a National Merit Semifinalist. Mr. Karson is Captain of the Quiz Bowl Team, President of Mu Alpha Theta, a member of the Spanish Honor Society and the National Honor Society and volunteers for the Center of Math, Arts and Science Achievement. He has also received the Varsity Baseball Coach’s Award and the Most Valuable Defensive Player Award, and has been the starting third baseman on the Varsity Baseball Team since his sophomore year. Mr. Karson has also leveraged his love of puzzles to create a club called Rubik’s Revenge, aimed to teach middle school students how to solve Rubik’s Cubes.

Mr. Liu is a junior who aspires to one day become a computer or electronics engineer or programmer. He is currently Vice President of the InvenTeams Club, Co-Director of his school's Math Team, and a member of the Liberal Arts and Science Academy's (LASA) National Honor Society Chapter. Mr. Liu is also a part of the LASA Camerata Orchestra and Science Olympiad Team. He is a part of the Circle C Swim Team, and also plays badminton and ping-pong.

Mr. Chen is a junior and is a member of his school's Mu Alpha Theta, Junior Engineering Technical Society and Computer Science Team. He is also an active volunteer at a local middle school Math Club. Mr. Chen's dad is a computer engineer and has taught mathematics and physics in the past, playing a large role in sparking his interest in math when he was young. His mother is also very encouraging and supportive of his passion for math and science, helping to foster his current academic interests. He enjoys practicing piano, playing tennis and programming games in his free time.

The team's mentor was Dr. Jian Shen, Professor of Mathematics at Texas State University in San Marcos, Texas.

Regional Finalists

Regional Finalists each received a \$1,000 scholarship.

Regional Finalists in the individual category were:

- Sai Achi, Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science, Denton, TX
- Somak Das, Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science, Denton, TX
- Prianka Ghoshal, Westlake High School, Austin, TX
- Sahil Khetpal, Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science, Denton, TX

Regional Finalists in the team category were:

- Fayen Bastani and Jonathan Lin, Jasper High School, Plano, TX
- Sumit Gogia and Patrick Kim, The Science Academy of South Texas, Mercedes, TX; and Vincent Yu, Sha Tin College, Sha Tin, Hong Kong
- Sunil Pai, The Kinkaid School, Houston TX; and Aneesh Sampath, Ward Melville High School, East Setauket, NY
- Tianjiao (Tom) Zhang and Liang Gu, Bellaire High School, Bellaire, TX

The Siemens Competition

The Siemens Competition was launched in 1998 to recognize America's best and brightest math and science students. In another record-setting year, 2,151 students registered to enter the Siemens Competition in Math, Science and Technology in 2009 – more than ever before - for a total of 1,348 project submissions – a 14% increase in project submissions over 2008 figures and more than a 12% increase in the number of registrations.

Entries are judged at the regional level by esteemed scientists at six leading research universities which host the regional competitions: California Institute of Technology; Carnegie Mellon University; Georgia Institute of Technology; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; University of Notre Dame; and The University of Texas at Austin.

Winners of the regional events are invited to compete at the National Finals at New York University in New York City, December 3 – December 7, 2009. Visit www.siemens-foundation.org on December 7, 2009 at 9:30 am EST to view a live webcast of the National Finalist Award Presentation. You can also log into and follow the Siemens Foundation on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/SFoundation>) for the latest information and announcements throughout this year's competition.

About the Siemens Foundation

The Siemens Foundation provides more than \$7 million annually in support of educational initiatives in the areas of science, technology, engineering and math in the United States. Its signature programs, the Siemens Competition in Math, Science & Technology and Siemens Awards for Advanced Placement, reward exceptional achievement in science, math and technology. The newest program, The Siemens We Can Change the World Challenge, encourages K-12 students to develop innovative green solutions for environmental issues. By supporting outstanding students today, and recognizing the teachers and schools that inspire their excellence, the Foundation helps nurture tomorrow's scientists and engineers. The Foundation's mission is based on the culture of innovation, research and educational support that is the hallmark of Siemens' U.S. companies and its parent company, Siemens AG.

For further information, visit www.siemens-foundation.org.

The College Board

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association whose mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board is composed of more than 5,700 schools, colleges, universities and other educational organizations. Each year, the College Board serves seven million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,800 colleges through major programs and services in college readiness, college admission, guidance, assessment, financial aid, enrollment, and teaching and learning. Among its best-known programs are the SAT[®], the PSAT/NMSQT[®] and the Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP[®]). The College Board is committed to the principles of excellence and equity, and that commitment is embodied in all of its programs, services, activities and concerns.

For further information, visit www.collegeboard.com.

NOTE TO EDITORS: B-roll and photos of winners available on request.

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