

The Kids' Science Challenge Winners Announced



National Science and Engineering Competition
for Third to Sixth Graders, funded by The National Science Foundation
Selects three winning entries
Entries Double in Year Two of the Competition



(Accord, NY, - March 31, 2010) Now in its second year, The Kids' Science Challenge is a nationwide annual competition for 3rd to 6th graders to submit experiments and problems for a select group of scientists and engineers to solve. The winning students, chosen from more than 1600 entries, will collaborate with scientists and engineers to see their ideas come alive. Funded by the National Science Foundation and created by Jim Metzner, the award-winning producer of the Pulse of the Planet radio series, to encourage elementary school students to discover that science is cool!

"In our first year, we had 770 entries, so we are very gratified that interest in this program is growing," stated Jim Metzner. "We received entries from 27 states! Once again, we feel extremely lucky to have a great group of scientists and engineers working in areas that immediately appealed to kids. We were impressed by the caliber of the entries and the scientists are really excited about collaborating with the winning students to work on the questions and challenges they've raised. The Kids' Science Challenge encourages team work and thinking outside the box. It demonstrates that science is not only cool – it matters," exclaimed Metzner.

Participating Scientists and Engineers for the Year Two Challenge, which launched October 1, 2009 include:

Bio-Designs – The winning student will work with Christopher Viney, Professor, Engineering, UC Merced and engineers at the University of Maryland to explore a problem using the world of nature as a springboard for new ideas.

Imagining Sports on Mars - Working with engineers at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, a budding engineer will come up with a game suitable for playing on the mysterious Red Planet.

Detective Science - Students will work with forensic and environmental scientists at Syracuse University to use the science of detection to solve a real life mystery.

And the winning students are:



Olivia Smith Donovan (Bio-Inspired Designs winner)

4th grader, Claymont Elementary School

Claymont, DE

Olivia took her inspiration from helicopter (maple tree) seeds which twirl around as they fall from the trees. She wondered if she could create a model big enough to be used to drop emergency parcels (and people) from great heights. She needs to figure out if people would get too nauseous to be dropped, spinning to earth and if this model could work for dropping packages. In addition to working with Christopher Viney at UC Merced to learn some of the principles of design and physics that could make her idea possible, she will also visit a lab at the University of Maryland where they are creating similar types of models, to develop her prototype.



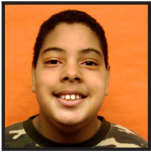
Caitlyn Taylor and Mason Wonka

"Team Marine Bustologists" (Detective Science winners)

6th graders, Storm Grove Middle School

Vero Beach, FL

The "Marine Bustologists" Caitlin and Mason are concerned about coral reefs in Florida being killed off by the sand and silt from dredging operations. Using samples of sediment, which they will collect with help from the Smithsonian Marine Station, they will then work with Earth Science Professor Don Siegel and a team of environmental scientists and forensic investigators at Syracuse University.



Tyrone Hutchinson II (Sports on Mars winner)

5th grader, Lyons Elementary School

Lyons, NY

Tyrone's idea for a game is called Magnetic Soil Ball. He incorporated the issues of gravity on Mars and the soil being magnetic to create a game where players use a magnetic ball, which will attract the magnetic soil as it is dribbled. The object is to shoot the ball into the basketball hoops, and as it drops, the magnetic soil will fall into a bucket below the hoop. The team that fills its bucket with soil first, wins. Players will wear golden astronaut suits and helmets for protection from UV rays. Tyrone will get to simulate his game at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

"The Kids' Science Challenge offers an innovative model that lets children pose research questions and suggest experiments to be conducted by real scientists and engineers," said Sandra Welch, program director in the Informal Science Education program at NSF. "Integrating traditional and new media -- including science radio broadcasts, podcasts, and blogs -- to engage kids in science challenges will help guide other educational efforts in the future."

The Kids Science Challenge website serves as a resource for kids and teachers, who will be able to track the progress of the winners, play educational science games, watch videos about the basic principles of science, and win prizes. Even though the competition winners have been announced, kids now have the opportunity to vote online for their favorite drawings in the Kids' Choice Awards, which will be announced on June 1st, 2010.

The Kids' Science Challenge winners and scientists will also be featured on Pulse of the Planet's broadcasts and podcasts on pulseplanet.com. Pulse of the Planet is broadcast over 320 public and commercial radio stations around the world, reaching one million listeners daily.

In April and May, the winning students will meet with scientists and engineers at their labs, workshops and in the field. The public can post comments and questions in response to new videos of their interaction, which will be online in May and June.

For further information about this year's and last year's winners, activities for children and teachers and to follow this year's winners, see **www.kidsciencechallenge.com**

Note: Jim Metzner, the Kids' Science Challenge winners and the scientists will be available for interviews through abriskin@aol.com

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