

2012 Science Fair



Connecticut Science Fair Association, Inc .

Statewide Science Fair
Quinnipiac University, March 13 – 17, 2012

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News for Bridgeport, Cos Cob, Greenwich, Hamden, Hebron, Manchester, New Milford, Westport and Brewster, NY

Connecticut Earns Top Results at International Science Competition

HAMDEN, Conn., May 18, 2012 – Four Connecticut students captured Grand Awards today at the 2012 Intel International Science & Engineering Fair (ISEF), the world’s largest pre-college science fair. The students traveled to the ISEF, held this week in Pittsburgh, Pa., as part of their prize for earning top awards at the Connecticut Science Fair (CSF) and/or the Science Horizons regional science fair held earlier this year.

“Today’s awards are among the best results ever for the Connecticut delegation,” said George “Bob” Wisner, director and chairman of the board of the CSF. “These young people are shining examples of dedication, hard work and talent. We are very proud of them. Based on today’s results, I am happy to report that science and engineering are alive and well in Connecticut.”

“The Connecticut delegation was well prepared and the hard work of our students paid off,” said David Liscinsky, Connecticut’s associate director of ISEF Week and a judging chair at the CSF. Liscinsky, a Pennsylvania native and Penn State graduate, settled in Connecticut in 1988 when he joined United Technologies Research Center.

“I had a unique perspective this past week,” Liscinsky said. “I saw our Connecticut kids compete against people from more than 68 countries in my home state. The number of awards captured by our state’s students is a reflection of the quality of the science curriculum and mentoring in Connecticut schools. We have a strong infrastructure that prepares students to compete at this level. To win awards among this caliber of competitors, students have to show up here with a high-quality product. This is a great event and our competitors go back to their schools and encourage others to participate. There is always room for more competitors and it would be great for more Connecticut kids to have this experience.”

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At today's ISEF Grand Awards ceremony, the following awards were announced:

- Ryota Ishizuka of Cos Cob, a senior at Greenwich High School, earned a first-place (\$3,000) Grand Award in the ISEF's Materials and Bioengineering category as well as a Best in Category Award (a \$5,000 scholarship and a \$1,000 grant to both his school and the Connecticut Science Fair Association). In a project called *An Organic Thin Film Transistor and Elastic Organic Solar Cell Based Electronic Skin for Biochemical and Tactile Sensing*, Ishizuka demonstrated flexible Organic Thin Film Transistor pressure sensors powered by reversibly elastic Organic Photovoltaic Cells, which may serve as electronic skin, mimicking tactile sensing for artificial intelligence. At Thursday's Special Awards ceremony, he also earned a first award (\$2,500) from the Society for Experimental Mechanics, Inc.
- Mallory Madfes, a junior at Greenwich High School, earned a fourth-place (\$500) Grand Award in the ISEF's Environmental Management category. In her project, *Mycroremediation of PCB Soil Contaminants with Pleurotus ostreatus*, she researched the use of oyster mushrooms in the mycroremediation of PCBs in a controlled soil-like environment. At Thursday's Special Awards ceremony, she also earned an Air Force Research Laboratory Award (first award of \$3,000).
- Bridget Oei, a sophomore at East Catholic High School in Manchester, who lives in Hebron, earned a second-place (\$1,500) Grand Award in the ISEF's Energy and Transportation category. For her project called *Polyvinylidene Flouride (PVDF) Piezoelectric Generator: A Novel Approach to Harvesting Vibrations from Human Respiration to Power Biological Implant Devices*, Oei explored the development of a practical micro-scale device for harvesting energy for biological implants from a regular human activity – respiration. At Thursday's Special Awards ceremony, she also earned awards from United Technologies Corporation (\$3,000 in shares of UTC common stock, a plaque, book, backpack and the UTC Annual Report), the U.S. Army (\$1,500, a certificate and a gold medallion), the Acoustical Society of America (a certificate of honorable mention) and the Patent and Trademark Office Society (first award of \$250).
- John Solder, a senior at Staples High School in Westport, earned a second-place (\$1,500) Grand Award in the ISEF's Behavioral and Social Sciences category. In his project, *Optogenetic Interrogation of Prefrontal Cortex Dopamine D1 Receptor-Containing Neurons as a Technique to Restore Timing: A Novel Approach to Treat Prefrontal Disorders*, he investigated optogenetic interrogation as a mechanism- and region-specific approach to treat prefrontal cortex impairments in response timing. At Thursday's Special Awards ceremony, he also earned an Addiction Science Award from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), National Institutes of Health & the Friends of NIDA (first award of \$2,500). The

At the Special Award ceremony on Thursday evening another member of the Connecticut delegation received an award:

- Yiyuan Hu, a senior at Hamden High School, earned an award from the Ashtavadhani Vidwan Ambati Subbaraya Chetty Foundation (second award of \$500 U.S. Savings Bond).

Also representing Connecticut at the ISEF were: Genesis Garcia, a senior at the Bridgeport Aquaculture School; Samantha Skaller, a junior at Brewster High School in Brewster, NY; and Jaden Williams, a junior at New Milford High School. All of the students earned their trip to the ISEF as part of their award for being top finishers at the 2012 Connecticut Science Fair and/or at the Science Horizons regional science fair held earlier this year.

* For pictures of CT delegation, visit <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ctsciencefair/with/7222654588/> *

*** For more information about ISEF, visit <http://www.societyforscience.org/isef/> ***

***** See www.ctsciencefair.org for ISEF photos and newsletters *****

The Connecticut Science Fair is made possible by a grant and volunteer support from its presenting sponsor United Technologies Corporation and by contributions from industrial and individual supporters.

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