WINNERS OF PITTSBURGH REGIONAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FAIR TAKE HOME AWARDS AT INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

FOUR LOCAL STUDENTS WIN GRAND PRIZES AND SCHOLARSHIPS

PITTSBURGH — The four students representing the Pittsburgh region in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in Los Angeles made their hometown proud. All four students took home either a grand prize or a special cash award.

The students won their spot at ISEF by participating in the 72nd annual Pittsburgh Regional Science and Engineering Fair (PRSEF), sponsored by Carnegie Science Center since 1940. More than 1,000 students from more than 100 schools throughout the region competed in PRSEF this year. Awards for the local competition totaled $1 million in cash and scholarships.

Intel ISEF 2011 Grand Awards
The Second Place Grand Award of $1,500 in Cellular and Molecular Biology went to Ishan Chatterjee, age 16, from Fox Chapel Area High School for the project “Novel Role of BAT3 in Regulation of Basal Macroautophagy.”

The Fourth Place Grand Award of $500 in Environmental Sciences went to Adam Joseph Dando, age 16, from Franklin Regional Senior High School in Murrysville for the project “Nitrate Retention Chemistry - Development of an Environmentally-Friendly Manure.”

Intel ISEF 2011 Special Awards
The First Place Award of $1,000, granted by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), was given to Natalie Janet Nash, age 16, from Vincentian Academy for the project “Optimizing Keyboards for People with Disabilities.” The ACM is an educational and scientific society uniting the world’s computing educators, researchers, and professionals to inspire dialogue, share resources, and address the field’s challenges.

Matthew Thomas Vernacchia, age 17, from Upper Saint Clair High School won three awards for the project “IrisScribe Eye-Typing Interface”: a Third Place Award of $350 from the IEEE Computer Society; the National Taiwan Science Education Center Award, which includes an all-expense paid trip to Taiwan to attend the Taiwan International Science Fair in February; and a Second Place Award of $750 from Synaptics, a leading worldwide developer of user interface solutions for consumer electronics.

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Pittsburgh students bring home awards from the International Science and Engineering Fair

“We are so impressed by all the winners at ISEF, and we are extremely proud of the four students from Pittsburgh,” says Ann Metzger, co-director of Carnegie Science Center. “The Pittsburgh Regional Science and Engineering Fair serves as a catalyst for students to take their interest in science careers to the next level, where they can gain regional, national, and international recognition.”

“Pittsburgh is known for being a city where great ideas are born,” says Ron Baillie, co-director of the Science Center. “However, it’s not just our companies that are the innovators; our students are on track to become the strong leaders of tomorrow in the fields of STEM and beyond. At the Science Center, we strive to give them a jumping off point, a place where they can experiment and explore science in a fun and informal way.”

ISEF brings together more than 1,200 students from 48 states and 40 nations to compete for scholarships, tuition grants, internships, scientific field trips, and the grand prize: a trip to attend the Nobel Prize Ceremonies in Stockholm. Pittsburgh has been chosen to host ISEF in 2012, 2015, and 2018. Carnegie Science Center was recently presented with an award from Visit Pittsburgh for helping to bring ISEF here. This event will provide a unique opportunity for Pittsburghers to interact with top young science researchers and innovators from around the globe. Pittsburgh was selected due to our rich traditions as a leader in science and technology.

About the Pittsburgh Regional Science and Engineering Fair
The Pittsburgh Regional Science and Engineering Fair, a Pittsburgh tradition since 1940, is the third oldest fair in the country under the affiliation of Science Services, Inc., which facilitates the International Science and Engineering Fair. The Science Fair is a program of Carnegie Science Center’s Regional SciTech Initiative, promoting a scientifically and technologically literate workforce and a knowledgeable, inspired public. For information, visit PittsburghScienceFair.org.

About the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair
The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) is held annually in May and brings together more than 1,500 students from 50 states and 50 nations to compete for more than $4 million in scholarships, tuition grants, internships, scientific field trips, and the grand prize—a trip to attend the Nobel Prize Ceremonies in Stockholm, Sweden.

About Carnegie Science Center
Carnegie Science Center is dedicated to inspiring learning and curiosity by connecting science and technology with everyday life. By making science both relevant and fun, the Science Center’s goal is to increase science literacy in the region and motivate young people to seek careers in science and technology. One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, the Science Center is Pittsburgh’s premier science exploration destination, reaching more than 700,000 people annually through its hands-on exhibits, camps, classes and off-site education programs.

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About Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh
Founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1895, Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh is a collection of four distinctive museums dedicated to exploration through art and science: Carnegie Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Science Center, and The Andy Warhol Museum. Annually, the museums reach more than 1.2 million people through exhibitions, educational programs, outreach activities, and special events.

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