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MEDIA ALERT | For Immediate Release
May 15, 2015
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PITTSBURGH STUDENTS WIN AWARDS AT INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FAIR

THREE STUDENTS AWARDED FOR WORK IN ROBOTICS, SYSTEMS SOFTWARE

PITTSBURGH, May 15, 2015 — Three Pittsburgh-area students won awards at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) held in Pittsburgh this week. Grand awards were announced Friday morning at The David L. Lawrence Convention Center.

In the Robotics and Intelligent Machines category, **Mihir Garimella**, 15, of Fox Chapel Area High School, won the second place award of \$1,500 for his project titled, “Biologically Inspired Flying Sensor Platform for Autonomous Emergency Response.” Mihir also won special awards from the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (third place), the European Organization for Nuclear Research, the International Council on Systems Engineering (honorable mention), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (third place).

In the Systems Software category, student duo **Suvir Prakash Mirchandani**, 16, and **Konrad Neal Urban**, 16, both of Fox Chapel Area High School, won the fourth place award of \$500 for their project titled, “Automated Illustration of Text to Improve Semantic Comprehension.” The student team also won special awards from the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (second place), the China Association for Science and Technology, and the European Organization for Nuclear Research.

Mihir, Konrad, and Suvir all have won Carnegie Science Awards as well – Konrad and Suvir, for this same project, and Mihir in 2011, for the robotic violin tuner project he completed as a sixth-grader.

Anna Wan, of Pittsburgh Allderdice (in Pittsburgh’s Squirrel Hill neighborhood), also competed at ISEF with a project titled, “Targeting Hippo-Regulated Cell Polarity in Breast Cancer.”

The students were selected for the international competition based on their projects submitted at Carnegie Science Center’s Pittsburgh Regional Science & Engineering Fair in March.

“Our students created extremely impressive projects, and all demonstrate a maturity and a skill and passion for science that are well beyond their years,” said Linda Ortenzo, the Science Center’s director of STEM programs. “ISEF gave them an opportunity to showcase their talents and to interact with like-minded students from around the world – all here in Pittsburgh.”

ISEF brought together about 1,700 students from nearly 80 nations and territories to compete for scholarships, tuition grants, internships, scientific field trips, and the grand prize: a trip to attend the Nobel Prize Ceremonies in Stockholm. Carnegie Science Center was instrumental in the selection of Pittsburgh to host ISEF in 2012, 2015, and 2018.

“The ISEF experience allows students to grow intellectually and personally and to receive important validation for their work from the highly accomplished professionals who judge the competition,” said Lisa Kosick, director of the Pittsburgh Regional Science & Engineering Fair.

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.

About Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

Founded by Andrew Carnegie 120 years ago, 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. The museums reach more than 1.3 million people a year through exhibitions, educational programs, outreach activities, and special events.

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