



MathScience Innovation Center

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2010 Metro Richmond Science Fair Students Advance to State & National Levels

The Metro Richmond Science Fair, hosted by the MathScience Innovation Center, was held on Saturday, March 27, 2010 at Powhatan High School. Winners were selected in both the Junior and Senior Divisions, e.g. Grades 7-8 and 9-12. Of the 256 students competing, 102 received trophies. In addition, a number of Senior Division students were chosen to represent the Richmond area at the Virginia State Science and Engineering Fair and the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair.

This year’s Grand Prize Winners, chosen as the top high school students in the MRSF, were **Andrew Sylvester**, a senior from Godwin High School’s Center for Science, Mathematics and Technology and **Saumil Bandyopadhyay**, a freshman from Maggie L. Walker Governor's School for Government and International Studies. Both students won a trip to the Intel ISEF in San Jose, California in May.

In April, 24 students, including 2 teams, traveled to Old Dominion University to represent the Metro Richmond area in the Virginia State Science and Engineering Fair (VSSEF). These students won 7 category places and a number of Special Awards. The category awards are listed below:

Second Place

Chemistry	Saumil Bandyopadhyay	Maggie Walker
Computer Science	Thomas Delgado	Chesterfield
Earth & Planetary Sciences	Ashley Hedberg	Henrico
Physics	Zachary and Ben Turner	Henrico

Third Place

Mathematical Sciences	TJ Phillips and Sam Rubin	Henrico
Plant Science	Clayton Geipel	Henrico

Honorable Mention

Computer Science	William Thomason	Maggie Walker
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The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair is the world’s largest high school science fair. It was held in San Jose, California from May 9th – May 14th. There were over 1600 students attending, representing 46 states and more than 50 countries. Over \$4 million dollars in prizes and scholarships was given away for category, organizational and government awards.

The MRSF Grand Prize Winners, **Andrew Sylvester** and **Saumil Bandyopadhyay**, represented the Richmond area well. Andrew's project was entered in the category of "Engineering: Electrical and Mechanical" and he was one of only a few finalists chosen for a \$10,000 scholarship from IEEE. Though he did not win the award, it was an honor to be so recognized. Andrew's project was based on improving the efficiency of polymer solar cells using zinc oxide nanorods.

Saumil, who competed in "Chemistry;" developed a new method to make metals more water repellent, or hydrophobic. He was chosen for an Air Force Second Award of \$1500 as well as a Fourth Award from the American Chemical Society of \$1000. Saumil also won a Fourth Place Award in his category, earning him an additional \$500.

The MathScience Innovation Center, through the Metro Richmond Science Fair, has been allowing students an avenue to compete and excel with their science projects since 1993. The first student was sent to the Intel ISEF in 2003 and since then, the MRSF has sent 13 students to the international competition. Most of these students were directly representing the MRSF, but 3 have gone as one of the state competitors, having advanced to VSSEF from the MRSF. All but 3 of the 13 students have won an award at the international level, which gives the MRSF, as well as the Richmond research community, an excellent reputation on the national and international levels and demonstrates the high quality of students in the Richmond area.