



Society for Science & the Public (SSP)

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News Release

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SEMIFINALISTS IN U.S. MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE COMPETITION ANNOUNCED

300 Young Scientists Compete for National Recognition and Top \$20,000 Scholarship

Washington, D.C., September 3, 2008 – At 248 middle schools across the United States today, 300 students are celebrating their selection as semifinalists of the Society for Science & the Public’s 2008 Middle School Program—America’s premiere science competition for middle school students. As the best and brightest young scientific minds in the nation, each of the 300 semifinalists, and their teachers, are honored for their dedication and achievement. A full listing of these semifinalists and their schools can be found at www.societyforscience.org/msp.

This year’s semifinalists were selected from 1,943 entrants representing 253 affiliated science fairs across the United States and Puerto Rico. The 300 semifinalists represent 42 states and Puerto Rico and include 177 males and 123 females. These top young scientists, in 5th through 8th grades when their entry was submitted, won the nomination by excelling at their regional or state science fair. Each entrant submitted written essays of their science, math, and engineering projects. Projects of selected semifinalists included research on water purification and fuel cells, mathematical algorithms and the amount of lead present in a student lunch box.

Elizabeth Marincola, president of Society for Science & the Public, said, “These talented young scientists are already stepping up to meet the great scientific challenges of tomorrow. Their work will have a real impact on generations to come and reaffirms the vision of Society for Science & the Public to inform, educate, and inspire the world around us.”

Since 1942, the science education programs of Society for Science & the Public (SSP), including the Intel Science Talent Search (originally the Westinghouse) and the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair have produced future winners of the world's most prestigious scientific and academic honors. Former finalists of SSP programs have gone on to win the Nobel Prize, the Fields Medal, the National Medal of Science, and MacArthur Foundation Fellowships.

Director of Education Programs for SSP, Michele Glidden, said of the semifinalists and their selection process, "Our evaluators and judges were amazed by the caliber of research these students achieved. This year's semifinalists, and their teachers and parents, are truly to be commended."

On September 17, 30 national finalists will be named from among these 300 semifinalists and will receive an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. for a four day event to be held in October. In the nation's capital, these finalists will compete for over \$40,000 in scholarships provided by the Society for Science & the Public. The top 10 winners will be selected based on presentation of their original science fair project and participation in team scientific activities to be held at the Koshland Science Museum and announced on October 22.

Society for Science & the Public (formerly Science Service), a nonprofit organization dedicated to the public engagement in scientific research and education, owns and has administered the national middle school science program since 1999. SSP is now working to identify a partnering sponsor for future years of this national middle school science program and competition.

Through decades of dedication to excellence, SSP has offered many of the most revered and prestigious science education resources in the world. To learn more about its programs and publications, including the nation's leading science magazine, *Science News*, visit www.societyforscience.org.