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Society for Science & the Public (SSP)

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News Release

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TOP WINNERS IN U.S. MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE COMPETITION ANNOUNCED

Christopher Sauer of Portola Valley, CA Awarded \$20,000 by Society for Science & the Public

Washington, DC, October 21, 2008 – Honoring the next generation of American scientists, Society for Science & the Public today announced the winners of the SSP Middle School Program—the nation’s premiere science competition for middle school students. Christopher Sauer, 13, Portola Valley, CA, won the top award, a \$20,000 scholarship from SSP. The winners were selected based on presentation of their original science fair project and participation in team-based, interactive science experiments held at the Koshland Science Museum. Katherine Glockner, 14, from Encinitas, CA, won 2nd place; Brittany Wenger, 14, from Bradenton, FL, won 3rd place; Luke Andracka, 13, from Crownsville, MD won 4th place and Elizabeth Karron, 12, Whitefish Bay, WI won 5th place. Each of the Finalists received a \$500 award.

Christopher, Katherine, Brittany and the other finalists worked in teams to conduct science experiments that explored topics associated with exhibits at the Koshland Science Museum including alternative energy and the spread of infectious diseases. Christopher’s original science fair project, An Engine with Nothing Inside? Building a Magnetohydrodynamic Drive was a team project with Jonathan Zdasiuk. The project involved building several simple prototype engines, suspending them in salt water and calculating the differences in thrust.

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Katherine Glockner's project, *Firestorm Fallout: Effects of Particulate Exposure on Peak Flow Rate* tested the lung function of fellow students after the 2007 San Diego County wildfires. Brittany Wenger created a computer program, "Neural Networks Score! Teaching the Computer How to Play Soccer."

The 2008 Finalists were selected from over 75,000 students who entered local science fairs nationwide in 2007–2008. From this pool, over 1,900 students submitted written entries and were narrowed down in early September to 300 Semifinalists, representing 42 states and Puerto Rico. Finalists received an all-expense paid trip to Washington, DC for a four-day event that concluded with tonight's award ceremony.

California, Florida, and Oregon led the nation with three Finalists each; followed by Maryland, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah with two Finalists each. A full listing of these Finalists can be found at www.societyforscience.org/msp; brief Finalist' project descriptions, biographical information, and interviews are available upon request.

Elizabeth Marincola, President of Society for Science & the Public, said "Every year, SSP has the great privilege of engaging with the brightest young minds in the country. We are very proud of Christopher Sauer, Katherine Glockner, and Brittany Wenger – and all of the SSP Middle School Program finalists – for their accomplishments, and more importantly, for their commitment to this critical field of study. Engaging the public in science and science education has been our mandate since our founding in 1921, and we are confident that these students will help accelerate our mission to inform, educate and inspire."

Society for Science & the Public, 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 welcomes Elmer's as a sponsor of this year's program and is now working to identify a title sponsor for future years of its national middle school science program and competition.

About Society for Science & the Public

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.

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 one of the world's leading science magazine, *Science News*, visit www.societyforscience.org.

About Elmer's

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