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Challenger School from Newark, Calif. Wins U.S. Department of Energy National Science Bowl® for Middle School Students

GOLDEN, Colo. – Challenger School from Newark, Calif. won the 2008 U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) National Science Bowl® for middle school students today held at the Colorado School of Mines. Challenger School beat Hopkins Junior High School from Fremont, Calif. in the national championship match. Teams representing 36 middle schools from across the United States competed in the national finals.

Members of the winning team include Nikhil Desai, Rahul Joshi, Aditya Limaye, Aditya Mukund and Arun Pingali. The coaches are Dipty Desai and Raji Pingali. The team members including the coaches won \$150.00 gift cards from amazon.com and a Texas Instrument NSpire-84 graphing calculator and a trophy. The answer that clinched the championship was in response to a math short answer question. The question is as follows:

Jiminy cricket is at the bottom of a 39.5-foot tall wall. He wants to get over the top of the wall. Each time he jumps, he jumps 4 feet up and falls back 3 feet. How many jumps will it take him to jump over the top of the wall?

Answer: 37

“Congratulations to Challenger School for their victory in the Department of Energy’s National Science Bowl for middle school students,” Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman said. “The Science Bowl is a key part of our ongoing efforts to ensure the U.S. remains the world’s leader in innovation, and I look forward to seeing these students among our nation’s next generation of scientists and engineers who will uncover the scientific breakthroughs of tomorrow.”

Placing second in the DOE National Science Bowl for middle school students was Hopkins Junior High School from Fremont, Calif. Team members are Max Isenberg, Jonathan Melville, Prasanna Rajan, Siddarth Sen and Jay Shah. The coaches are Paul Ricks and Alpa Shah. The team members including the coaches won \$125.00 gift cards from amazon.com and a Texas Instrument NSpire-84 graphing calculator and a trophy.

The third place team was St. Andrews Episcopal School from Amarillo, Texas, including Nikit Desai, Niral Desai, Cooper Lindsey, Kunal Mehta and Saahil Mehta. The coach is Marcella Herrington. This team’s prizes included \$125.00 gift cards from amazon.com and a Texas Instrument NSpire-84 graphing calculator and a trophy.

To ensure that today's brightest students become tomorrow's scientific leaders, President Bush announced the American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI) in 2006. This initiative increases investment in research and development, strengthens science and math education, and encourages entrepreneurship and technology discovery. DOE's National Science Bowl exemplifies how children who are engaged, encouraged and equipped with proper resources can succeed academically. The goal of the ACI – and the National Science Bowl – is to invest in the next generation of scientists, engineers and educators so America can continue to successfully compete in the 21st century global marketplace.

The ACI supports educational activities, such as the DOE National Science Bowl, in an effort to excite more middle and high school students to take mathematics and science classes.

More than 180 middle school students competed in this weekend's national finals. Earlier this spring, more than 6,500 students from across the country participated in regional Science Bowls for middle school students. The winners of the regional middle school Science Bowls received all-expense paid trip to compete in the national finals in Golden, Colo. DOE recognizes all the students who competed as true mathematics and science stars, representing the nation's next generation of scientists and engineers.

DOE created the National Science Bowl in 1991 to encourage high school students to excel in mathematics and science and to pursue careers in these fields. In 2002, DOE started a similar competition for middle school students. DOE supports mathematics and science education to help provide a technically trained and diverse workforce for the nation. More than 130,000 students have participated in both competitions of the National Science Bowl since 1991.

On Friday, June 20, Treasure Valley Math and Science Center from Boise, Idaho won the overall first place in the Hydrogen Fuel Cell Model Car Challenge—a hands-on competition held during the Science Bowl weekend in which student teams were challenged to design, build, and race fuel cell model cars. There were three components to the car competition: race, design document, including a journal of how the car was built; and a hydrogen presentation illustrating the use of hydrogen in transportation. While the DOE National Science Bowl focuses on academic achievement, the Hydrogen Fuel Cell Model Car Challenge spotlights the creative energy of the brightest math and science students in the nation by giving them the opportunity to envision, design and manufacture cars of their own.

“As a sponsor of the National Science Bowl and as an automotive manufacturer, GM is excited to see so many motivated students participate in the competition and the hydrogen fuel cell model car challenge,” said Elizabeth A. Lowery, GM vice president, Environment, Energy, and Safety Policy. “Today's students are the future engineers and scientists that will be part of the continuing transformation of automotive propulsion technology, so at GM we believe it is important to encourage and support education in science, technology, engineering and math.”

This year's corporate National Science Bowl for middle schools students sponsors were General Motors, Texas Instruments, Shell, Southwest Airlines and the Fuel Cell Store.

A photo of the winning team and more information about the DOE National Science Bowl are available at <http://nationalsciencebowl.energy.gov>.