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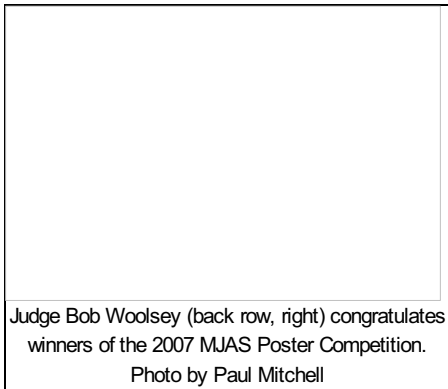
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## Statewide Science, Math, Engineering Competition for High School Students Produces Winners

NOVEMBER 28, 2007 BY ADMIN



Judge Bob Woolsey (back row, right) congratulates winners of the 2007 MJAS Poster Competition. Photo by Paul Mitchell

OXFORD, Miss. — High school students visited the University of Mississippi recently for a statewide science-engineering-mathematics poster competition and workshops on an upcoming catapult competition.

The Mississippi Junior Academy of Science sponsored the poster competition, hosted at UM this year for the third time. Fourteen students in grades 9-12

competed, and \$4,700 was awarded by MJAS and the Mississippi Academy of Sciences. Winners are to participate in the 2008 American Junior Academy of Science Conference at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in February.

“Students participating in these sessions not only present their posters, they also have the opportunity to attend professional scientific conferences and publish their work in the MAS Scientific Journal,” said Maxine Woolsey, director of MJAS and educational outreach specialist for the School of Engineering. “These opportunities give students visions of where they would like to be in a few years and provide a purpose to their education.”

Asanka Nanayakkara of Oxford, a junior at the Mississippi School for Mathematics and Science in Columbus, received the Clyde O. Sheely Award and a \$1,000 reimbursement scholarship toward the MIT competition. Making the presentation was MAS representative Robert Fritzius, a judge for the UM competition.

Nanayakkara’s biochemistry poster was titled “Acetylcholinesterase Inhibitors from Herbs as Treatments for Alzheimer’s Disease.” He is the son of Dhammika Nanayakkara and Kumundini Meepagala.

Oxford High School sophomore Thien Che was awarded the first-place trophy for grades 9-10 and a \$500 reimbursement scholarship toward the MIT competition. Che’s physics poster was titled “Magnus Effect in Tennis.” His parents are Tri and Van Che.

Other winners were Natalie Omattage of Cleveland, Xiaotian Liu of Starkville, La’Mont Sutton of Jackson, Sandesh Shettar of Ridgeland and Nathan Barnett of Brandon.

Omattage, a senior at MSMS, was presented the Mississippi Academy of Science Award and a \$1,000 scholarship. Her

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#### Students Learn ‘Real Politics’ in Washington, D.C., Winter Session

OXFORD, Miss. – Eleven University of Mississippi students spent their winter break learning about the people who work behind the scenes of the American government in Washington, D.C. Lead by Jonathan Klingler, assistant professor of political science, the students of Pol 391: Applied Politics met not with candidates, but with the people who make candidates’

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#### Young Alumna Gives Back to School of Accountancy

OXFORD, Miss. – Stephanie Jennings Teague, of Chicago, sees her commitment of \$100,000 to the Patterson School of Accountancy’s new building at the University of Mississippi as a means of saying “thank you.” “It is a way to show a small token of my appreciation to Ole Miss, the faculty and staff, and the accounting

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#### Reuters: Keep an Eye on the Money Supply

U.S. inflation roller coaster prompts fresh look at long-ignored money supply By Michael S. Derby NEW YORK – The amount of money sloshing around the U.S. economy shrank last year for the first time on record, a development that some economists believe bolsters the case for U.S. inflation pressures continuing to abate. The Federal Reserve’s

biology poster was titled "Development of Biosensors for Detecting Hazardous Chemicals." She is the daughter of O.P. and Thishya Perera.

Liu, a senior at MSMS, received the first-place trophy for grades 11-12 and a \$500 scholarship. His chemistry poster was titled "Catalytic Gasoline Synthesis." His parents are Wenxuan Liu and Yujie Zhang.

Sutton, a senior at Murrah High School, was awarded the second-place trophy for grades 11-12 and a \$300 scholarship. His biology poster was titled "Role of Tissue Transglutaminase Type 2 in Calbindin D28k Interaction with Ataxin-1." He is the son of La'Rue and Mary Sutton.

Shettar, a senior at St. Andrew's Episcopal School, was presented the third-place trophy in behavioral science for grades 11-12 and a \$300 scholarship. His poster was titled "A Demographic Analysis of Smokers Seeking Cessation Treatment at the ACT Center." He is the son of Shambhavi and Shashidhar Shettar.

Barnett, a senior at MSMS, received the third-place trophy in chemistry for grades 11-12 and a \$500 scholarship. His poster was titled "Preparation of Activated 4-Cyanodithio Pentanoic Acid and RAFT Polymerization of Free Amine Containing Polymers." He is the son of Larry and Sandra Barnett.

"It was a pleasure judging the posters as the students were extremely knowledgeable of their research and were very well prepared for their presentations," said poster judge Bob Woolsey, director of the Mississippi Mineral Resources Institute at UM. "I have judged science fairs and the MJAS poster sessions in previous years; these are some of the brightest and most impressive students I have talked with."

The visiting students also attended two workshops on engineering a trebuchet, which is a gravity-driven catapult. The information sessions were in preparation for the students to participate in the catapult competition scheduled Feb. 5, 2008 in the Ole Miss Indoor Practice Facility.

Workshop presenter Ken Sleeper, associate director of MJAS and project coordinator with MMRI, explained how to design and construct a trebuchet to meet the specifications required for the competition.

Speakers for the second workshop were local physician Will Dabbs, who is also trained in mechanical engineering, and portrait artist Jason Bouldin of Oxford. Dabbs spoke on the history of medieval catapults, explained the engineering of trebuchets and demonstrated trebuchets of various sizes.

Photos and information from the poster session and the trebuchet workshop will be posted on the MAS Web site,

<http://www.msacad.org>.

For more information about MJAS activities and events, contact Maxine Woolsey, MJAS director, at [mwoolsey@olemiss.edu](mailto:mwoolsey@olemiss.edu) or [mjas@olemiss.edu](mailto:mjas@olemiss.edu).

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