



# MathScience Innovation Center

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## **Two Richmond Area Students Among Winners at International Science Fair**

The Metro Richmond Science Fair, sponsored by the MathScience Innovation Center, is proud to announce that two Richmond area students were among the winners at the 2009 Intel International Science and Engineering Fair which just concluded on May 15<sup>th</sup> in Reno, Nevada. **Jonathan Guinther** and **Suraj Mishra**, both of whom attend the Center for Science, Mathematics and Technology at Godwin High School, received a Third Place and a First Place, respectively, in their categories. This places them among the top 18 percent of the more than 900 students presenting their individual research.

Jonathan and Suraj won the opportunity to compete at the Intel ISEF at the Metro Richmond Science Fair in March. Their projects were chosen as the top two out of all the projects submitted from Richmond area high schools. They spent the week of May 11 – 15 at the Intel ISEF, along with more than 1500 other students from 56 countries around the world.

Jonathan's project, *Optimizing Biodiesel Fuels: What SHOULD We Be Growing?*, was in the category of Energy and Transportation. He tested several characteristics of the fatty acids which make up various vegetable oils to determine which one would make the best biodiesel fuel. There were 76 students competing in Jonathan's category and his Third Place put him in the top 12 in the section. The Third Place ribbon also came with an award of \$1000.

Suraj has been competing and winning awards with the Metro Richmond Science Fair since he was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. For the last two years he has been studying the effect of the antioxidant, resveratrol, on human cells. His current project, *Investigating the French Paradox: Resveratrol as a Potential Antioxidant in Mesenchymal Stem Cell Differentiation and Genomic Stability*, was selected as one of two First Place winners in the category of Cellular and Molecular Biology at the Intel ISEF. This places him in the

top 3% of the approximately 950 students competing with individual research projects and brings him an award of \$3000.

The Metro Richmond Science Fair is sponsored each year by the MathScience Innovation Center and has been in existence since 1992. The fair affiliated with the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in 2002 and sent its first representative to compete at the Intel ISEF in May, 2003. Since that time the MRSF has sent eleven students to compete in the international competitions, with nine of them winning either a category or organizational award. This only goes to show the quality of the research that is being done by students in the Richmond area.

The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair is the largest pre-college science competition in the world and has been rewarding students for good research since 1950. It is owned and administered by the Society for Science and the Public, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping the public to recognize and become involved in scientific research and education. The Intel ISEF has been sponsored by the INTEL Foundation for the last 13 years and that partnership was just renewed for an additional 10 years. Over \$4,000,000 in prizes, scholarships and educational trips are given away at the competition each year.

To qualify for the Intel ISEF students must first submit a project to the Metro Richmond Science Fair which is a 2-level fair. Submitted project papers are read and scored by the preliminary judges, or screeners, in February. Top scoring students are offered an opportunity to present their projects at the MRSF in March. Two high school students are selected as Grand Prize Winners each year and these students win an all-expense paid trip to the Intel ISEF. Top Senior Division winners are also given the chance to compete in Virginia State Science and Engineering Fair in April, where they can win additional prizes and two more opportunities to go to the Intel ISEF.

The Math Science Innovation Center is a 42-year-old organization dedicated to futuristic math and science education for K-12 teachers and students. Its vision for 2015 focuses on implementing new programs in fractal geometry, engineering, nanotechnology, environmental modeling, and distance learning. The MathScience Innovation Center is an educational consortium comprised of eight school divisions: Chesterfield, Colonial Heights, Hanover, Henrico, King William, Petersburg, Powhatan, and Richmond. Other divisions also participate through abbreviated memberships: Charles City, Hopewell, Prince George, and the Steward School.