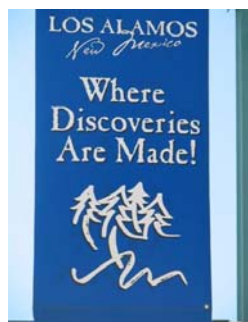


## *Greetings to friends of the Connecticut Science Fair and Science Horizons Science Fair,*



Our adventure continues on day three of this amazing experience in Albuquerque, New Mexico. It was an early rise this morning, because we were headed to Los Alamos National Labs to meet with scientists to learn about the history and science behind this famous science town. We began at 7 am and headed north towards Santa Fe. The students, Mr. Schmidt, and I traveled together in the minivan and we enjoyed the breathtaking views. The students were taking pictures galore as we spoke of the beauty and geology of this landscape.



We entered Los Alamos and noted that it looked like a small college town. Some stores here and there and some older quonset-hut type buildings. Stopping at the historical society's museum, we met our hosts for the day: Phil Tubesing and Julie Bremser, principal scientists at Los Alamos. Some may recall that Julie was the former Awards Chair for the CT Science Fair. Julie and Phil provided breakfast for the students and absolutely fascinating descriptions of both the history of Los

Alamos and their research and engineering projects.

After a walking tour of the lodge area, we went into the historical museum. Many of us listened to Phil's stories of his research. We probably could have listened all day. What exciting stuff!

Los Alamos also has a science museum and that was our next stop. We had a fuel cell demonstration, and then some of the daring students took a ride on a scooter, also powered by fuel cells. After watching some of the students maneuver the scooter, I am personally questioning how they got their drivers licenses. At the science museum, we were joined by a very distinguished guest: Haskell Sheinberg. Haskell arrived at Los Alamos in 1944 and was one of the original Manhattan Project scientists. What a true honor to meet him – his stories were absolutely fascinating. He also wanted to hear about our students, so they told him about the research they were conducting.



We then headed up to the research campus and each student was paired with a scientist from Los Alamos for lunch. The students had an opportunity to share research with their "lunch buddy". George actually got a tour of his lunch buddy's laboratory – George reports that this is a definite highlight for him. The adults enjoyed Haskell and Phil's company as we shared more stories.



from L→R,  
Russel, Alex, Dayton, Elisabeth, Haskall, Julie & George



Bob is thrilled to meet Haskall and share experiences!



As we prepared to depart, Phil suggested an alternate route to return. He described it as scenic, and perhaps about 20 minutes longer. The route would take us by a large caldera and give us a great view of the countryside. We obliged, and began our journey of switch-backs, narrow roads, and fabulous views. As we began the ride, the students recorded their impressions of the visit to Los Alamos. **The 4-minute audio file is available as a Podcast on the CSF-ISEF site.** Click and listen to the students talk about today's experience. *If your Internet speed is not fast enough, you can save the file to your hard drive and listen that way. (PC users use a right-click and "Save target as...")* We made many stops along the way to admire and appreciate the scenery. Twenty supposed minutes turned into an extra hour and a half, but it was absolutely amazing! I know my words and pictures just can't describe this area with justice. Below are a few shots for your enjoyment – many more on the website.



The day ended with the students, again, rained out of an outdoor ISEF social event. (Does it really rain this much in the desert?) We, instead, had a meal at the hotel and headed to bed a little earlier than usual. After all, tomorrow is judging day!

To conclude, Dayton Horvath shares a glimpse of ISEF 07. Dayton's project, "*Design, construction, and testing of a novel, inexpensive, rapid coliform detection system,*" is in the Environmental Sciences category.

Here in the center of the largest competition for high school science students, I gained a new perspective after only a short time. To see this whole new level after the Connecticut Science Fair made me realize why they refer to everyone as a finalist, just for being here. In the past two days I've seen a massive convention center, traded pins with people from all over the world, and talked with a scientist working at the Los Alamos National Laboratory. With the exception of a small violation and a short morning spent preparing my poster board, I haven't been here for the Intel fair as much as for an experience beyond that. I overlooked the things I'd see and learn, which is really the best part about having an opportunity like this. I would consider this a prestigious intellectual vacation that gives a new definition to a science fair. The opening ceremony was rather lengthy but whoever was in charge of lighting, special effects and the huge movie screen seemed like they had done this before.

One of the bonuses of being at Intel ISEF is being around other people who love science in some respect, so everybody has something in common. I'm pretty sure the Puerto Ricans and a few other well-represented nationalities left their inhibitions at home. Blatantly waving their country's flag, singing, shouting and taking pictures, the atmosphere is something most American's don't get to experience. I suppose it compares to being in a country represented in the finals of the FIFA World Cup during the match.

Tomorrow begins the day of reckoning for the finalists, a full day of judging. Hard to imagine that two days of awards ceremonies and millions of dollars in prizes and scholarships depend on the results of one day. I'm looking forward to judgment day because it defines the purpose of our coming here, to show our stuff and see how it stacks up with everyone else's stuff. Of course winning anything would be beyond great because its good enough for me to be here as a participant. In the end, all 1512 finalists were brought to New Mexico by their projects but it is their national pride and character that made this place worth my while.



Remember to please be sure to check out the CSF-ISEF website for updates of pictures as well as today's Podcast of the student's impressions of Los Alamos.

For the Connecticut Science Fair and Science Horizons,  
*Frank LaBanca*  
Newtown High School