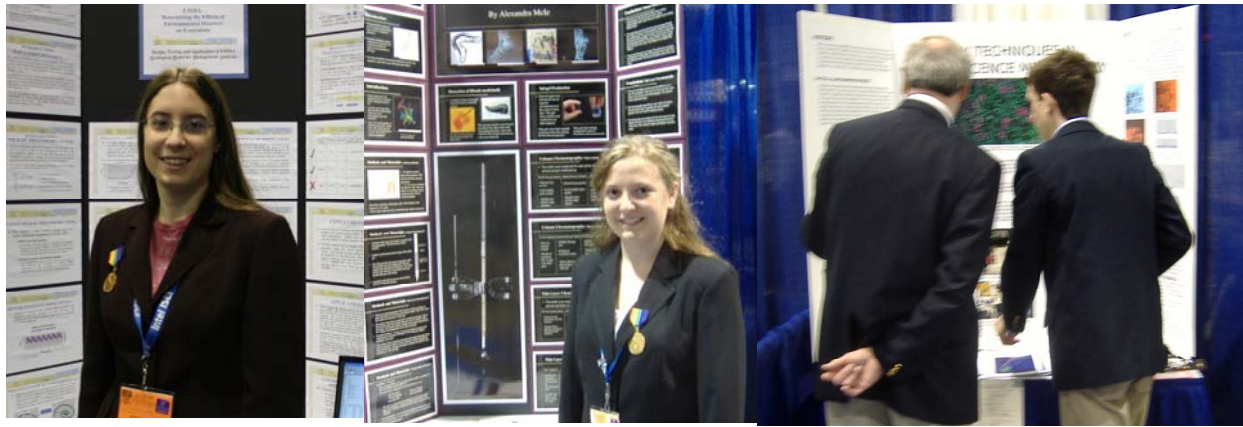


## *Greetings dedicated ISEF followers:*



Thursday brought the late risers. After a grueling day of judging, the students had the opportunity to sleep in a bit. They were due to man their projects at 10 a.m. for the public viewing session. Wynn and Sandy attended the Scientific Review Committee ShopTalk session, Bob and Sue were busy snapping photographs and taking videos of students. Ed was visiting projects talking with students, and I was recruiting students to be subjects of my dissertation. As many of you know, I am conducting a study examining science research students' processes for coming up with their research ideas, "problem finding."



This session was also long, and intense, but filled with opportunities for students to network and spend time together. We had some downtime in the hotel, so the students caught up with some schoolwork, emails, and snacks.

Wynn arranged dinner at Bennigan's before the Special Awards Ceremony. As you can see, Dayton ordered one huge "giantormous" chicken sandwich, while Russell went with the petite selection of 4 "mini burgers."



After a hearty meal, we headed to the coliseum for the awards program. We are pleased to report that Russell won a \$25,000 scholarship from the Albany School of Pharmacy of Union University. We enjoyed seeing his picture on the giant screen. Later in the evening Bob was

joined by UTC senior research chemist, Dr. Treese Hugener-Campbell to present the United Technologies Awards.



Russell receiving his scholarship



Treese and Bob awarding the UTC awards



We arrived at the hotel, and while we waited for the elevator, Dr. Elizabeth Marincola, the president of Science Service joined us for a minute to discuss the week's events. To celebrate Russell's award, we all headed to the hotel restaurant for a late-night dessert. Sue Wisner can attest to the yumminess of the treats!

Elisabeth Baseman shares some of her ISEF experiences with you today. Elisabeth's project "EMMA: Determining the Effects of Environmental Disasters on Ecosystems" was in the Environmental Management Category.

My name is Elisabeth Baseman, and I am a senior at Brewster High School in Brewster, NY. I qualified for the Intel ISEF by placing 2<sup>nd</sup> in Life Sciences at the Connecticut State Science Fair. My research, in which I present my own mathematical model of ecosystem and report on its general dynamics in relation to environmental disasters and wildlife management, is titled *EMMA: Determining the Effects of Environmental Disasters on Ecosystems*. Next fall, I will be attending Amherst College in Massachusetts where I have been offered a position in the Schupf Scholar program. I am planning to major in mathematics with a possible double major in music performance.

Presenting at the Intel ISEF is something I worked toward for four years, and finally attending the international science fair is an incredible experience. I've met students from Hungary, Australia, China, Saudi Arabia, and Germany, and the student across from me in the project display area is from Egypt. It is an amazingly diverse conglomerate of people, and it is worth coming just for the social and cultural experience, let alone the science or awards.

It's surprising how much social activity goes on here, considering that we are among a group of 1,510 science nerds. During award ceremonies, the keynote speakers walk on stage to what could be backup music to current pop songs. This is one event that certainly does not align itself with the stereotypical science fair. Intel ISEF is, as the presenters told us today, the "Superbowl" of science fairs. The award winners, whether they received honorable mention or first place, received applause and screams of glee from the entire crowd. The three top winners were received like rock stars by the crowd.

On a different note, we were notified of an outbreak of measles Thursday night, after noticing that the number of finalists had dropped from 1,512 to 1,511. What followed, at least among our Connecticut delegation, were many jokes about bioterrorism, needing to call Los Alamos to get Jack Bauer, and

references to a recent episode of House MD. We were all surprised to hear this morning, when the presenters again mentioned the number of finalists, that the number had fallen to 1,510. No explanation was provided.

As this week draws to a close, I would like to take a few words to comment on the absolutely superb opportunities provided to high school students by science research classes, state and regional science fairs and the Intel ISEF. While we as 'student scientists' do our actual research on our own, we wouldn't get anywhere without the strong science research programs at our high schools. In addition, fairs like Connecticut State that have people as amazing as the Müllers and Wisners organizing the Intel trip are probably the most important aspect of the high school science experience. Participation in a science competition forces every student to challenge ourselves in both science and presentation skills, both of which are talents that last a lifetime.

We will report our results from the Government Awards and Grand Awards tomorrow. Until then, thank you for your kind words and support of Connecticut's finest young scientists.

Regards,

*Frank LaBanca*

Newtown High School