

Greetings to our friends of the Connecticut Science Fair and Science Horizons,

We had an exciting day of awards ceremonies today, capped off with our traditional Sponsor's dinner atop the 10,000+ ft elevation of Sandia Mountain. A special thank you to all of those individuals, families, alumni, businesses, and corporations who make this experience possible.

At the government awards Elisabeth Baseman was awarded first place in Environmental Management from the Army, and Dayton Horvath was awarded first place in Environmental Sciences from the Air Force. Each won a \$3,000 scholarship.



At the grand awards ceremony, Elisabeth and Alex placed fourth in their categories: Environmental Management and Animal Sciences, respectively. Dayton and George placed third in their categories: Environmental Sciences and Physics, respectively.



Elisabeth walking on stage



Elisabeth and Alex honored for their 4th place awards



Dayton receiving his award



George and Dayton on stage for 3rd place awards

Alex reports on her ISEF experience. Alex's project "Integrating Hirudin from *Hirudo medicinalis* into an Anticoagulative Medication for *Equus Caballus*: Phase I, Collection and Purification" was in the Animal Science Category.

This has been a great week at the Intel ISEF. We have experienced Mr. Schmidt's eating habits (a mole of Fruit Loops), rain in the desert, a trip to Los Alamos where no one trained Jack Bauer, and over 1200 extremely sophisticated science projects from across the world. Just in the area around my project, I met Jurgan from Alaska, Jed from Nevada, Kai-Jun from China, and Tessa from London.

On Judgment Day, I presented for six category judges from various backgrounds, the most interesting of whom was the director of veterinary medicine of New Mexico, who strongly urged me to patent my work. He also told me to consider veterinary medicine as a career, so I would never be faced with the ego problems of human physicians. Overall, my project seemed to be well received by the judges, and it was a great experience to present to someone who had already reviewed my research. Most of the time allotted with each judge was spent answering the questions they had prepared the day before.

Our trip to Los Alamos was also an exciting event. After touring the museums and having the opportunity to talk with Haskell Sheinberg about our research and his, I met up with my lunch buddy Dr. Elizabeth Hong-Geller. She told me about the projects on which she is currently working, and described the ways in which her job has been changing with the introduction of new technology.

Today began with the government and grand awards ceremonies. I placed fourth in animal sciences, and also succeeded in getting very sun burnt. We then had a wonderful dinner at the top of Sandia Peak in the middle of a lightning storm. The ride on a 2.7 mile tram there and back was very scenic, and we got to see Albuquerque all lit up at night. The Mullers and the Wisners have made the ISEF 2007 yet another great and successful week. Also, having Mr. Schmidt and Mr. LaBanca along was a great help to us, as well as a constant source of entertainment. We have all had an unforgettable week.

Russell shares his experience and a humorous anecdote. He demonstrates how participating in a school research program, really helps students know, not only their own projects, but the research of their classmates as well. Russell's project, "The Elution of Iodine Out of a Hydrophilic Wound Dressing" was in the Medicine and Health Sciences Category.

As the competition ended today and each of us ISEF'ers tallied up our respective accolades, I began to wonder what exactly this experience meant to me. As my science research teacher, Mr. Bramante puts it, going to Albuquerque is like landing on the moon. Not only is the topographic landscape completely foreign, but the "Southwestern Hospitality" represents a completely different mindset and approach to everyday life. The best example of this different attitude was with the local Albuquerque police force. We were at an outdoor dinner event, and as we walked around we saw police giving lessons on how to ride their Segways to eager students. This fostering of a community attitude

was completely unlike the tension between local authorities and the young population at home.

This generous and communal attitude was contagious. As my parents will tell you, I am a monster right after I wake up in the morning (or after my afternoon nap). However, each morning I woke up without complaint, and I was even fairly sociable. Despite the close quarters, I can truly say that each of us ISEFers has formed new friendships and bonds not only with each other, but with many of the other young scientists around us.

An anecdote and one of my favorite moments of this trip I would like to share occurred on the day of public viewing. We had each signed a contract stating that the day after judging, Thursday, we would stand by our projects for 6 hours and explain our projects to anyone who was there for the public viewing period. After an extremely tense and taxing judging day, more time explaining our projects was not looked upon favorably. George and I decided that we would have some fun, and instead of standing around presenting our own projects the whole time, we would switch occasionally, and attempt to share each other's work. I think I did an adequate job doing so, forgetting the fact that at one point I had a very difficult time pronouncing "fluorescence microscopy" (try it, its not so easy). George did a very good job presenting my project. Exchanging projects made the long day much shorter for both of us.

Thank you for sharing the week with us. It has been a pleasure to spend it with these five amazing, talented, young scientists.

Regards,

Frank LaBanca

Newtown High School Science Department