

**Indiana: The Science State
May competitions will attract thousands of future scientists and engineers**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BLOOMINGTON, Ind. -- With two major research institutions and a penchant for producing and attracting Nobel laureates, the state of Indiana is as much about sub-atomic quarks and capillaries as basketball and car racing.

Indiana seeks a way to combine the four in one way or another as it plays host to two major science competitions this month: Intel's International Science and Engineering Fair in Indianapolis (May 7 - 13, Indiana Convention Center), and the Science Olympiad National Tournament in Bloomington (May 18 - 22, Indiana University Bloomington campus).

Judges will evaluate students' impressive science and engineering projects at ISEF. At Science Olympiad, student teams will work together to complete chemistry experiments, build functioning robots, analyze the physics of music making, and launch projectiles as they "Storm the Castle."

At a time when U.S. dominance in the sciences appears to be flagging, university leaders and competition organizers believe competitions like SO and ISEF encourage young Americans to become scientists and engineers -- especially women, and racial and ethnic minorities. Perhaps as a result of campaigns to equalize the representation of males and females in engineering and the sciences, state, national and international science competitions are usually populated by more girl competitors than boys.

SO organizers expect 1,800 students at this year's competition. Teams -- all of whom have won state competitions earlier this year -- will be challenged to think faster, communicate more clearly and coordinate more effectively than their peers.

ISEF organizers are expecting 1,400 students this year from 40 nations. The students will compete for scholarships, tuition grants, internships, scientific field trips, and the grand prize -- a \$50,000 college scholarship. Science Service, which publishes Science News magazine, founded ISEF as an annual competition in 1950.

Counting competitors' parents, teachers, chaperones, administrators and volunteers, SO and ISEF events should draw approximately 25,000 to 30,000 people to Indiana in May.

Last month, the Webby Awards named Indiana University's Science Olympiad National Tournament Web site (<http://www.indiana.edu/~nso>) an Official Honoree in their yearly "Best of the Web" competition. The IU Web site was created by Ned Shaw (illustrator), Dave Rust and Kyle Haskins.

This is the first year IU has sponsored ISEF. The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair is supported by the Intel Corporation and Intel Foundation (title sponsors), as well as Agilent Technologies, Inc. (presenting sponsor); Intel Education; the Merck & Co., Inc.; Ricoh Co., Ltd.; Baxter BioPharma Solutions; Eli Lilly and Co.; the Roche Diagnostics Corporation; the Dow Chemical Company; Science News magazine and Science Service; Indiana University and others.

More information about ISEF events is here:

<http://www.intelisef2006.org/index.htm>

IU first hosted the Science Olympiad National Tournament in 1995. Only three universities have hosted the tournament twice -- IU, Ohio State University and Michigan State University. The state Science Olympiad is frequently hosted by IU Bloomington.

The Science Olympiad National Tournament is supported by The Sallie Mae Fund (presenting sponsor); as well as Indiana University; Eli Lilly and Co.; the DuPont Corporation; Abbott Laboratories; MasterBrand Cabinets, Inc.; the Lumina Foundation; BioCrossroads; the IU Credit Union; the Biomet Foundation; Texas Instruments; the Raytheon Company; the Guidant Foundation; the Chandra X-Ray Center (a joint venture of NASA and the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory); the Brooks and Joan Fortune Family Foundation; Terry Trippe; and Bloomington's WonderLab.

Virtually every research department at IU Bloomington is involved in some way. Hundreds of faculty, staff and students have volunteered to aid competition organizers. Special support for the tournament is provided by the IU Bloomington College of Arts and Sciences.

A complete list of Science Olympiad National Tournament events is here:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~nso/tournament/competitions.shtml>

A master schedule of SO events is here:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~nso/tournament/master.shtml>

As the tournament progresses, SO organizers will post news and updates here:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~nso/tournament/update.shtml>

To speak with a representative of The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair, please contact Jennifer Boehm at 317-910-8366 (cell) or jrboehm@iupui.edu. Media and general public are welcome to attend ISEF events on Thursday, May 11, from 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m., or Friday, May 12, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

To speak with a representative of Science Olympiad, please contact Jennifer Kopach at 630-792-1251 or jrkopach@comcast.net. Most events are open to the public, but visitors are asked to contact Tournament Co-Director Jocelyn Bowie at 812-855-5265 or jbowie@indiana.edu.

To arrange interviews with student competitors or for general information about Indiana University, please contact David Bricker, IU Media Relations, at 812-856-9035 or brickerd@indiana.edu.