

Hawai'i State Science Olympiad

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*****PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION*****

Science Olympiad Receives \$300,000 Federal Grant Award

Honolulu, HI – The Hawai'i State Science Olympiad (HSSO), a science education non-profit organization associated with the National Science Olympiad, has received a federal grant award totaling over \$300,000. The award, part of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) portion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, will be used to operate and expand the Science Olympiad program in Hawai'i.

The Hawai'i State Science Olympiad (HSSO), founded in 2004, is the state affiliate for the national organization and is an independent, federally recognized 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of science education for K-12 students in Hawai'i. "Science Olympiad gets kids interested in science through real-world, hands-on activities," said Franklin Allaire, the state director for HSSO. "Our events are also fun and exciting to participate in and watch."

Hawai'i received a total of approximately \$35 million in Part B State Fiscal Stabilization Funds. Governors have discretion over how to use these funds. The Lingle-Aiona Administration has elected to dedicate all of the Part B funds toward improving the quality of public education, with a focus on STEM.

HSSO, an all-volunteer organization, was chosen to receive funds based on its ability to provide a high quality Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)-related program throughout the State of Hawai'i. The Science Olympiad program runs annual regional tournaments on Kaua'i, O'ahu, and Maui as well as an annual statewide tournament open to all public, private, charter, and home school students in Hawai'i. "I am pleased that another respected organization promoting STEM education in our schools will be able to significantly expand their program to benefit more students," said Governor Linda Lingle.

"The Hawai'i Science Olympiad has grown immensely in the last few years, and this grant means more teams, more training and more tournaments," said Dr. Gerard Putz, president and co-founder of Science Olympiad. "We are grateful that Governor Lingle put her stamp of approval on the program."

HSSO has also been recognized for its ability to partner with government agencies (Hawai'i DOE, Maui Economic Development Board), non-profit organizations (ARCS Foundation Hawai'i, Pacific American

Foundation, professional groups (American Association of University Women, Hawai'i Science Teachers Association, Sigma Xi, Women in Technology), science/technology businesses (DowAgro, Monsanto, Raytheon), and College/University campuses and departments statewide.

Funding received through ARRA will be used to operate and expand the Science Olympiad program in Hawai'i. This includes supporting schools through HSSO's Rural and Neighbor Island Science Initiative, providing in-state professional development for teachers, providing funds for teachers to attend out-of-state professional development workshops, expanding early childhood science education through the Elementary Science Olympiad program, forming new partnerships with members of Hawai'i's science/technology business community, and expanding the number of local and regional opportunities for students to participate in Science Olympiad.

"These funds will help open up new doors for many students in science, technology, engineering and math fields," said Lt. Governor Duke Aiona. "Students who engage in STEM education, with the support of parents, teachers and mentors, are gaining critical thinking skills that will help them throughout their future careers."

Founded in 1984, Science Olympiad is one of the largest team-based science competitions in the United States with nearly 200,000 students on 6,000 middle/high school teams in all 50 states and Canada participating annually. Students at the 2010 Science Olympiad National Tournament were eligible to receive awards and prizes including four-year scholarships worth \$100,000 for each of the 62 gold medal winners from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana.

For more information about the Hawai'i State Science Olympiad and the Science Olympiad program in Hawai'i please contact:

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