



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TOP U.S. STUDENTS COMPETE IN THE 2019 SCIENCE OLYMPIAD NATIONAL TOURNAMENT AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY

ITHACA, NY — Talented teens from across the nation will gather at Cornell University May 31-June 1 to battle it out in intensely competitive science and engineering projects. More than 5,000 students, parents and educators from all 50 states and the District of Columbia will descend on Ithaca for the 35th annual Science Olympiad National Tournament, hosted this year by Cornell. Among the visiting schools will be a Global Ambassador Team from Japan.

The public is welcome to attend many of the competition events, taking place in Cornell's Robert Purcell Community Center, the iconic Barton Hall, and Cornell Athletics facility Bartels Hall, and other venues across campus. The opening and closing ceremonies will be held in Barton Hall. Read a full schedule at <https://www.scienceolympiad2019.org/>

Cornell University President Dr. Martha E. Pollack, herself a scientist, is thrilled that Cornell will be hosting the Science Olympiad. "Universities are second to none in effecting change in the world, and we have a vital responsibility to advance the cause of STEM education," she says.

In addition to her role as President at Cornell, Dr. Pollack holds tenured appointments in Cornell's Computer Science and Information Science departments and has served on the steering committee for the Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute, Cornell's partnership with Israel's Technion at Cornell Tech campus in New York City. When she entered the Computer Science field, Dr. Pollack likes to quip, "there were more computer science professors whose name was Igor than there were female computer science professors." Of the upcoming event in Ithaca, Dr. Pollack says, "This year's Science Olympiad is an amazing opportunity for us to host some of the nation's most promising young minds, many of whom will surely be the future scientists and engineers we'll hear about for years to come."

To celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the National Tournament, the Science Olympiad Executive Board will present four \$10,000 Founders' Scholarships for outstanding achievement by high school national-level competitors. This scholarship honors the legacy of the three founders of the Science Olympiad national

organization, Dr. Gerard and Sharon Putz of Michigan, and Jack Cairns of Delaware. Entry requirements can be found on the Science Olympiad website [here](#).

The approximately 2,000 students from 120 middle and high schools were their states' top performers at competitions held this year. Middle and high school students compete separately. School-based teams prepare and practice throughout the year, then compete in regional and state tournaments. Representing New York this year will be Paul J. Gelinas Junior High School of Setauket-East Setauket, Eagle Hill Middle School of Manlius, Columbia High School of East Greenbush, and Ward Melville High School of Setauket-East Setauket, New York who won their respective New York Science Olympiad state tournaments held in March and April.

For the national tournament, the students – one team from each school – will compete in 23 separate events pertaining to various scientific disciplines, including Earth science, biology, chemistry, physics and engineering. The 23 events test students' knowledge in anatomy, physics, astronomy and more. In the Battery Buggy event, the students are required to design and build a battery-power vehicle. In Crime Busters, students identify perpetrators of a “crime” by identifying substances like powders or hair. And in Disease Detectives, the students are quizzed on epidemiology and how diseases spread.

“Many of the students we see in Ithaca this year will go on to top universities like Cornell, and there’s no doubt that the national tournament is a launching pad for every single one of them,” says Mrs. Jamie Cucinotta, CEO of the New York State Science Olympiad and this year’s National Tournament Director. “All of the disciplines represented at the tournament are a preview for these students of what could be next, and a chance to work together in teams, as they might at their next school or in industry.”

The two days of events will include a keynote address during the Opening Ceremony by Grant Imahara, a creator and former star of “MythBusters” and Netflix’s “White Rabbit Project,” and an engineer at Lucasfilm’s THX and Industrial Light and Magic divisions. The well-known electrical engineer and roboticist has devoted much of his career to making science and technology fun, approachable, and engaging.

“Students have been working for months to perfect their designs, build prototypes, practice lab skills and test their knowledge in topics spanning every letter in STEM,” said Jenny Kopach, Science Olympiad executive director. “We can’t wait to see which teams come out on top at the 2019 Science Olympiad Tournament.”

Science Olympiad is supported nationally by Cornell University, ArcelorMittal, NASA’s Universe of Learning Astrophysics STEM Learning & Literacy Network, Lockheed Martin, Ward's Science, Google, Corteva Agriscience, NBC Universal Foundation, ACE Hardware, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Combined Federal Campaign, Discovery Education 3M Young Scientist Challenge, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the North

American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE), Potbelly Sandwich Works, Texas Instruments, VWR Foundation, Academy of Model Aeronautics, Investing in Communities, SkyCiv, Society for Neuroscience (SfN), Yale Young Global Scholars, Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation Institute (DMDII), Hardware Science, Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), Million Women Mentors (MWM), Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE) and Code.org. Local supporting sponsors are Cornell University, Lockheed Martin, New York Science Olympiad, Cornell College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Syracuse University, Cornell Engineering, the Cornell College of Arts and Sciences and Cornell Computer and Information Science.

Science Olympiad is a national nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve quality of science education, increase interest in science, attract more students to science careers, foster teamwork, emphasize the problem-solving aspects of science, and develop a technologically literate workforce. It has produced a generation of alumni who fill the hallways of top universities and corporations around the globe.

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