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## **TOP U.S. STUDENTS COMPETE IN THE FIRST-EVER ALL-VIRTUAL SCIENCE OLYMPIAD NATIONAL TOURNAMENT**

OAKBROOK TERRACE, IL — A unique Science Olympiad season will culminate in the organization’s first virtual National Tournament in its 37-year history. Instead of traveling to the Arizona State University (ASU) campus, 120 Science Olympiad teams from all 50 states will log on to an online platform and battle it out in intensely competitive science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) challenges on Saturday, May 22, 2021. Among the participating schools will be a Global Ambassador Team from Japan.

“I have admired the spirit and tenacity of our Science Olympiad community since the pandemic hit in 2020,” said Jenny Kopach, Science Olympiad CEO. “I am immensely proud that we came together in partnership with ASU to provide this experience for students, which is often a launch pad to future college and workforce success.”

One of the nation’s most prestigious STEM competitions, Science Olympiad pivoted to a virtual format for the 2020-2021 academic year, providing new ways to play for students learning at home, at school or after school. The competition is still comprised of events designed by experts from government agencies, top universities and industry covering topics in engineering, physics, epidemiology, astronomy, chemistry, meteorology and coding; lab, hands-on and building events are creatively and safely run this year as video submissions or live interviews. Streamed Opening and Awards Ceremonies will be held on Friday, May 21 and Monday, May 24 at 7pm CT. See the full list of events, schedules and prizes [here](#).

Chris Cassidy, NASA Astronaut, Navy SEAL and Commander of the International Space Station will provide the Opening Ceremony Keynote Address. In his speech, he recognizes Science Olympiad participants as “the future scientists who will take people to Mars, who will solve the climate crisis, and who will invent technology we can’t even imagine yet.” NASA is a longtime program partner of Science Olympiad and is supporting an Urban Schools Initiative for new Science Olympiad teams in Phoenix this fall.

Arizona State University, which has been named the Most Innovative University for six years in a row, will be featured during the National Tournament [STEM Expo](#), Monday, May 17 to Friday, May 21. The week is open

to everyone and will kick off with a virtual campus tour and Access ASU panel discussion on college-going, followed each day by enriching hands-on science activities, live webinars, Expo Talks by Science Olympiad alumni and surprise giveaways. Students will be welcomed to the competition by ASU President Michael Crow and Tournament Co-Director and Arizona Science Olympiad State Director Reina Gomez.

To honor the legacy of the three founders of the national organization, Science Olympiad will present five \$10,000 Founders' Scholarships to outstanding high school seniors during the Opening Ceremony on Friday, May 21. More about the scholarship and the founders, Dr. Gerard and Sharon Putz of Michigan and Jack Cairns of Delaware, can be found [here](#).

As part of its Character and Citizenship in the Community (the 3C's) and Smart to Be Good initiatives, Science Olympiad teams are encouraged to participate in a [national service project](#) to honor the city that would have hosted an in-person tournament; Science Olympiad has set a goal to raise at least \$5,000 for the St. Vincent de Paul Food Reclamation Center to help families fight hunger in the greater Phoenix area. "We are thrilled to partner with Science Olympiad on this effort," said Marcelino Quinonez, ASU Director of Educational Outreach and Partnerships and Board Member of St. Vincent de Paul, Phoenix. "Empowering students to think outside themselves and help provide solutions to those in need is tremendously important. I can't think of a better group to help lead us to food security than the next generation of STEM leaders in Science Olympiad."

Science Olympiad is supported nationally by Arizona State University, ArcelorMittal, NASA's Universe of Learning Astrophysics STEM Learning & Literacy Network, Ward's Science, Corteva Agriscience, Combined Federal Campaign, Double Good, Google, Lockheed Martin, NBC Universal Foundation, ACE Hardware, Discovery Education 3M Young Scientist Challenge, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Intel, Kinder Morgan Foundation, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE), Potbelly Sandwich Works, Texas Instruments, Avantor Foundation, Hikma Pharmaceuticals, Investing in Communities, National Free Flight Society, SkyCiv, Yale Young Global Scholars, Digital Manufacturing Innovation Institute (MxD), Hardware Science, Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), Midnight Science Club, Million Women Mentors (MWM), Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE) and Code.org. Local supporting sponsors are Arizona State University, Access ASU, The Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering, The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Arizona Science Olympiad.

[Science Olympiad](#) is an Oakbrook Terrace-based, national non-profit organization founded in 1984 dedicated to improving the quality of K-12 STEM education, increasing interest and opportunity in science, creating a technologically literate workforce and providing recognition for outstanding achievement by both students and teachers.

[Arizona State University](#) has developed a new model for the American Research University, creating an institution that is committed to access, excellence and impact. ASU measures itself by those it includes, not by those it excludes. As the prototype for a New American University, ASU pursues research that contributes to the public good, and ASU assumes major responsibility for the economic, social and cultural vitality of the communities that surround it.

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