



Florida Junior Academy of Science

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2014 FJAS Competition

For the 2013–2014 school year, ten chapters renewed their affiliation with a total of 322 members. There were also 17 individual members for a total of 339 members. Of these 158 students submitted papers to the preliminary competition. Eighty students were initially invited to present at the 2014 competition. When cancellations were received an additional 8 students were invited to present based on their scores from the judges of the preliminary competition. Once again many students did not follow the guidelines for submitting their papers which may have prevented their papers being selected. The most common problems that caused students to lose points were:

- Generic attachment name (FJAS paper is not appropriate, use key words of the paper title)
- Student's name, school, or mentor's name appears in the paper or in attachment file name
- Papers exceeded the 2MB size – these were sent back to be corrected, but delayed acceptance

Many judges and myself have limits on our inbox and large files were not always accepted.

Seventy students presented their research at Indian River State College in Fort Pierce on March 8, 2014. This competition would not be possible without the help of many people. Our thanks go to:

- Indian River State College for allowing us to use their facilities
- Casey Lunceford and Meghan Buckley who arranged the use of the facilities
- Florida Academy of Sciences for providing judges for both the preliminary and IRSC competitions
- Sanjay Sesodia, President, and Jenny Bouchard of Florida Academy of Sciences
- Patricia Zalo, FJAS Director
- Pine Crest, Presidential Chapter for providing refreshments and moderators
- Manatee, Secretarial Chapter for assisting Ms Zalo
- Judges for their time and expertise
- FJAS sponsors who encourage students in scientific research and competitions
- Parents of FJAS members who support their children in their pursuits
- FJAS members for participating in research and presentations
- Volunteers who stepped forward to moderate the sessions

Discussion of Funding Dominated the Business Meeting

Jamie Odzer of Dr. Michael M. Krop, who won the scholarship, shared her experiences at AJAS with the other students who attended. In addition they thanked Ms Gordinier of Pine Crest who acted as the chaperon. The highlights of the conference that is held in conjunction with the American Association for the Advancement of Science include the two presentations: one similar to FJAS and the other, a poster presentation for AAAS. In addition to touring local facilities the students enjoyed a breakfast with scientists. All of the students shared that AJAS is a wonderful opportunity. Last September, Ms Zalo requested a donation from Florida Academy of Sciences to help fund the trip when she realized that the current funding could not cover the costs for this trip. FAS did award FJAS \$1000 with the expectation that FJAS would increase the dues and registration fees to make FJAS more sustainable. Students who place as a high school junior can apply for the scholarship.

After hearing from the students who attended the American Junior Academy of Sciences we discussed the options for continuing to offer the AJAS scholarship for one student and a chaperone to attend this annual event. Dr. Charles Gordon of American Heritage made a motion to increase the rates for membership and registration as listed below which was approved by everyone present at the meeting.

Chapter affiliation fee - \$40 – (this pays for 2 late members who want to submit papers)

Membership for each student in a chapter paying the affiliation fee - \$10

Individual membership - \$20

Web membership - \$15 (these students receive only one mailing)

Late memberships (received after December 31st) – double the normal rates listed above

Registration at the FJAS annual competition - \$5 for each student attending the meeting

During the Business Meeting American Heritage was elected as the Presidential Chapter and Pine Crest as the Vice Presidential Chapter for the 2014-2015 school year.

2014 FJAS Competition Results

Middle School Biology

1st - Hemangi Rajpal of American Heritage

2nd - Astha Jeloka of Stone

3rd - Minaal Murshid of Stone

4th - Yasmine Charles-Harris of American Heritage

High School Environmental Sciences

1st - Vaidya Govindarajan of Archimedean

2nd - Robert Halfon of American Heritage Boca/Delray

3rd - Preksha Bhagchandani of Pine Crest

4th - Nicole Odzer of Pine Crest

Middle School Environmental Science

1st - Haniya Shareef of Lincoln Park

2nd - Caroline Nolan of Stuart

3rd - Nithya Kasarla of American Heritage

4th - Elliot Whitney of Stone

High School Literary

1st - Dan Sicorsky of Dr. Michael M. Krop

2nd - Carson Poltorack of Pine Crest

3rd - Genevieve Selden of Pine Crest

4th - Arian Mansur of Archimedean

Middle School Physical Sciences

1st - Rachel Dowell of Home school

2nd - Nicholas Mirchandani of American Heritage

3rd - Assara Nincevic of American Heritage

4th - Dawson Cohen of American Heritage

High School Medical Sciences

1st - Robert Bacchus, Jr. of Lincoln Park

2nd - Lauren Houle of Pine Crest

3rd - Nanrouyi (Zoe) Zhou of American Heritage

4th - Allison Belette of Pine Crest

High School Biological Sciences

1st - Laura Herman of Pine Crest

2nd - River Grace of West Shore

3rd - Brigitte Blanco of Pine Crest

4th - A. J. Sacks of Pine Crest

High School Physical Sciences

1st - Priya Sathyanarayan of Spruce Creek

2nd - Nhu Le of Sarasota

3rd - Peter D. Jones of Olivet

4th - Norah Mubarek of Spruce Creek

In addition to the place awards, the following students were recognized by the judges for their outstanding presentations:

Logan Bolick of Stone

Elizabeth Donoway of Pine Crest

Aiden James Dowell of Home school

Jonathan Mirchandani of American Heritage

Emily Ortiz of Stone

Alexander Rabin of American Heritage

Ciarra Rava of Stone

Elias Rosenfeld of Dr. Michael M. Krop

Ethan Seeloff of Stone

Antares Tobelem of American Heritage

Holly Tucker of Union County

Danielle Warren of Stone

FJAS scholarships were awarded to Robert Bacchus, Jr. of Lincoln Park and Courtney Sparger of Spruce Creek. Only students who attend a college or university in Florida are eligible to receive the \$200 in the fall.

The 2015 FJAS competition will be held at St Leo University in St. Leo, Florida on March 21, 2015.