



# Florida Junior Academy of Science

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## 2016 FJAS Competition

For the 2015–2016 school year, 6 chapters renewed their affiliation with a total of 176 members. There were also 14 individual members for a total of 190 members. Of these members, 115 students submitted papers to the preliminary competition. Seventy-five students were initially invited to present at the 2016 competition. An additional 4 students were invited based on their scores from the judges of the preliminary competition, after presenters reported they were unable to attend.

Fifty-eight students presented their research at University of South Florida in Saint Petersburg on March 19, 2016. This competition would not be possible without the help of many people.

Our many thanks go to:

University of South Florida in Saint Petersburg for allowing us to use their beautiful facilities  
Norine Noonan, PhD who arranged the use of the facilities, welcomed students to the campus, assisted with technology, and secured funds to pay for the use of the facility and parking  
Florida Academy of Sciences Council members for providing judges for both the preliminary judging and at University of South Florida in Saint Petersburg  
Jeremy Montague, PhD, President of Florida Academy of Sciences  
Jenny Bouchard, Office Manager of Florida Academy of Sciences who helped with registration  
Patricia Zalo, FJAS Director  
Leya Joykutty and Kannan Nagarajan who accepted the papers for the preliminary competition, organized the sessions and sent papers to the judges  
Pine Crest, Presidential Chapter for assisting with the awards ceremony  
American Heritage, Vice-Presidential Chapter for providing moderators  
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 scientific pursuits  
FJAS members for participating in research and presentations  
Students who moderated the sessions

## Business Meeting announces Patricia Zalo's "Retirement"

FJAS Director, Patricia Zalo, reported that this would be her last year as director and that the Florida Academy of Sciences Council would be announcing her replacement at the June or September board meetings. She was humbled by the standing ovation recognizing her 25 years of service to FJAS.

Nicole Odzer of Pine Crest who won the scholarship to AJAS shared her experiences along with Malini Basu and Elizabeth Feldman who were nominated to attend AJAS/AAAS. High school students placing in a FJAS experimental category during 11<sup>th</sup> grade can apply for the scholarship which covers the registration, flights, and hotel rooms for the student and chaperon. Other students can apply to be nominated to attend at their own expense. Applications were available during the Awards Ceremony and are due September 1<sup>st</sup>.

River Grace of West Shore encouraged students to investigate other possible scientific conferences. Last year he searched on "Google" for competitions related to his research on snakes. He submitted his abstract, was accepted and presented at two professional conferences this past year.

The students attending the State and the International Science & Engineering Fairs were recognized and applauded. Patricia Zalo also gave Certificates of Appreciation to Zachary Adam and Courtney Crawford of Episcopal and the American Heritage students: Satya Alagarsamy, Dawson Cohen, Emily Pallack, Kayla Smith and Kamryn Washington; and who moderated sessions. Zoe Barbeau of the Research Coast FJAS was announced as the FJAS scholarship winner if she attends a Florida college.

During the Business Meeting Pine Crest was elected as the Presidential Chapter and American Heritage as the Vice Presidential Chapter for the 2016-2017 school year.

## 2016 FJAS Competition Results

### Middle School Biological Sciences

1<sup>st</sup> – Retika Jeloka of Stone Magnet  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Rishi Patel of American Heritage  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Dakota Floyd of Stone Magnet  
4<sup>th</sup> – Gauri Kasarls of American Heritage  
OP – Kiara Richmond of Stone Magnet

### Middle School Physical Sciences

1<sup>st</sup> – Gyro Delos Trinos of Lake City  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Riley Hamilton of Olivet Private  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Daryn Cook of Stone Magnet  
4<sup>th</sup> – Charith Reddy of American Heritage  
OP – Lily Hall of Stone Magnet

### High School Medical Sciences

1<sup>st</sup> – Lauren Waldman of American Heritage  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Zara Joykutty of American Heritage  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Teerth Patel of Sarasota MAST  
4<sup>th</sup> – Srijith Nair of American Heritage Boca Delray  
OP – Benjamin Klein of Sarasota MAST

### High School Literary

1<sup>st</sup> – Rebecca Schecter of Pine Crest  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Rachel Dowell of Research Coast FJAS  
OP – Amanda Rabin of Pine Crest

### High School Biological Sciences

1<sup>st</sup> – River Grace of West/Shore  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Maxwell Gu of American Heritage  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Aashay Patel of American Heritage Boca Delray  
4<sup>th</sup> – Nithya Kasarla of American Heritage  
OP – Isha Goel of American Heritage

### High School Environmental Sciences

1<sup>st</sup> – Haniya Shareef of Lincoln Park  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Elizabeth Feldman of Pine Crest  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Melina Michel of American Heritage  
4<sup>th</sup> – Nicole Odzer of Pine Crest  
OP – Zachary Zeller of Episcopal

### High School Physical Sciences

1<sup>st</sup> – Yiyun Pan of American Heritage  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Malini Basu of Pine Crest  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Padmavathi Reddy of American Heritage  
4<sup>th</sup> – Howard Andre Royce of Episcopal  
OP – Hunter Fields of Pine Crest

OP is an Outstanding Presentation Award

## Congratulations to SSEF Winners

The 61<sup>st</sup> State Science & Engineering Fair was held at Lakeland Center March 29 – March 31, 2016 where 24 of the FJAS presenters also competed. Of these students 18 placed representing 75% which is significantly greater than the 39% of the students with individual projects who didn't compete at FJAS won place awards. All of the FJAS competitors were recognized on stage for their projects. Congratulations to:

**First Place:** River Grace, Ritika Jeloka, and Nithya Kasarla

**Second Place:** Olivia Lazorik, Rajat Ramesh and Omar Shareef

**Third Place:** Malini Basu, Zara Joykutty, Gauri Kasarla, Lila Mish, Srijith Nair, Nicole Odzer, Yiyun Pan, Hemangi Rajpal, Zachary Zeller

**Fourth Place:** Gyro DelosTrinos, Elizabeth Feldman and Haniya Shareef

**Honorable Mention:** Aashay Patel and Padmavathi Reddy

**Recognition Awards:** Trishala Kumar and Howard Royce

**Special Awards:** Stefan Abi-Karam and Marina Handal

The 2017 FJAS competition will be held at the **Florida Polytechnic University in Lakeland on March 11th**. We hope to see you there. You can't compete unless you join – see the junior academy pages on [www.floridaacademyofsciences.org](http://www.floridaacademyofsciences.org)