

Alert:

Spring 2008
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College Board

YES Competition Marks Fifth Anniversary

2008-09 YES
Competition
Guidelines

Available
June 17, 2008

Online submission
deadline

February 2, 2009
by 9:00 am ET

YES National
Event

April 17-20,
2009

On April 4th, 60 high school students, representing 25 states, arrived in Washington, D.C. full of excitement and anticipation. The weekend to present their research at the Young Epidemiology Scholars (YES) Competition had finally arrived. As the students checked in, their enthusiasm was evident. They were about to embark on an experience that would make a lasting impression. College scholarships would be awarded to all, including two first-place scholarships of \$50,000 each.

The YES Competition is designed to inspire students to investigate the social, environ-

mental, and biological factors that affect the health of the public, applying epidemiological methods of analysis in their research. This year the topics ranged from using geospatial analysis to determine households with the highest rates of malaria cases in a rural area of Haiti to the study of aspirin usage and the risk of pancreatic cancer. Students had 12 minutes to present their research to a panel of nationally recognized epidemiologists and teachers, followed by a question-and-answer session conducted by the judges.

Katie Everett of Ann Arbor, MI, won a \$50,000 college scholarship for her research titled, "A Sexual-Network-Based Model Evaluating the Impact of Human Papillomavirus Vaccination on Infection Prevalence in an Adolescent Population." The other \$50,000 scholarship was awarded to Jessica Palmer of Ossining, NY, whose research was titled, "Examining Repetitive Behaviors in Parents and Siblings of Individuals with Autism." Jessica plans to attend Cornell University in the fall.

This year the students were privileged to hear remarks from Dr. Al Sommer, dean emeritus, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School

continued on page three



First place winners: Katie Everett and Jessica Palmer



Young
Epidemiology
Scholars

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Dr. John Lumpkin of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Diane Tsukamaki of the College Board

First Place \$50,000 Scholarship

Katie Everett
Huron High School
Ann Arbor, MI
A Sexual-Network-Based Model Evaluating the Impact of Human Papillomavirus Vaccination on Infection Prevalence in an Adolescent Population

Jessica Palmer
Ossining High School
Ossining, NY
Examining Repetitive Behaviors in Parents and Siblings of Individuals with Autism

Second Place \$35,000 Scholarship

Emily Barker
Marshfield High School
Marshfield, WI
A Study of the Rate of Contact in Children to Apply to Influenza Transmission Calculations

Maya Mathur
Castilleja School
Palo Alto, CA
Predictors of Human Papillomavirus Vaccination and Participation in Vaccination Decision-Making Amongst High School Girls

Third Place \$20,000 Scholarship

Elyssa Goldberg
Roslyn High School
Roslyn Heights, NY
Nobody Wants to Be Lonely: Factors Contributing to Friend-Networking Site Use

Katherine Xue
Oak Ridge High School
Oak Ridge, TN
Sleep Deprivation in Adolescents: Causes, Extent, and Effects

National Finalists \$15,000 Scholarship

Utsav Bhat
Westmont Hilltop High School
Johnstown, PA
Baseline Physical Health Is an Independent Predictor of Long-Term Mortality After Myocardial Infarction: A Ten-Year Study

William Chang
Olathe North High School
Olathe, KS
Geographic Distribution of Malaria Cases in a Rice-Growing Region in Rural Haiti

Qiushuang (Michelle) Jin
West High School
Iowa City, IA
The Association Between Heavy Academic Workload and Sleep Deprivation Among High School Students

Scott Kobner
Hunterdon Central Regional High School
Flemington, NJ
CA-MRSA: Efficacy of Prevention Education Among Athletes

Danielle LeePow
Benjamin Elijah Mays High School
Atlanta, GA
An Examination of the Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Sexual Activity Among African American Girls

Jonathan Yeh
Troy High School
Fullerton, CA
Case-Control Study of Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug Use and Risk of Pancreatic Cancer



YES National Finalists



YES Competition Marks Fifth Anniversary

(continued from page 1)

of Public Health and Dr. Michelle Williams, professor of epidemiology at the University of Washington. Dr. Harvey Fineberg, president, Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, addressed the students at the final awards ceremony. In addition to these distinguished speakers, the students were able to engage with nine YES alumni who attended the event in celebration of the program's fifth anniversary.

The buzz word during the weekend was "passion." Julie Rechel, 2006–07 YES Scholar, in her enthusiastic remarks to the students at the opening dinner said, "passion will propel you toward the top.....passion will inspire you and those around you.....passion is what YES is all about." As the weekend came to a close and the students said good-bye to one another, it was clear that this was not only a competition but truly an inspirational and educational experience for each of them.

More than 550 students nationwide entered the competition this year, and a total of \$456,000 in scholarships was awarded to



Julie Rechel, 2006–07 YES Scholar

120 students, including the 60 finalists who participated in the National Event. Since its inception five years ago, the YES Competition has received nearly 3,200 research projects in epidemiology and awarded over 600 scholarships totaling \$2.3 million. Supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and administered by the College Board, YES continues to be in the forefront of scholarship competitions.

Dr. Michelle Williams Addresses YES Scholars

Dr. Michelle Williams challenged the YES Scholars "to communicate effective ways to solve health problems and promote health across the globe, locally and nationally." Addressing an audience of over 200, including the 60 YES Finalists, parents, judges and guests at the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, she spoke



with passion about her love for epidemiology.

Dr. Williams is a tenured professor of epidemiology at the University of Washington School of

Public Health and Community Medicine, and co-director of the Center for Perinatal Studies at Swedish Medical Center. Her research interests and activities are women's reproductive health and child health. Her current activities include research and teaching collaborations with epidemiologists in Peru, Ecuador, Vietnam, Thailand, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, and the Republic of Georgia.

In 1993, Dr. Williams founded the University of Washington Multidisciplinary International Research Training (UW-MIRT) Program, which has trained 150 students from economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds for research and leadership careers in public health. By identifying and implementing alliances for this global health program, Dr. Williams provides undergraduate students with life enriching and academically rigorous experiences in developing countries.

As the daughter of Jamaican immigrants, she credits her mentors for inspiring and supporting her academic achievements. Dr. Williams has received numerous awards including the prestigious Abraham Lilienfeld Award that recognizes excellence in teaching epidemiology.



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YES Alumni Return

Nine YES Alumni returned to the National Event to help celebrate the fifth anniversary of the competition. They represent each of the prior four classes of YES Scholars, and they attend different colleges and universities across the country. All continue their avid interest in science, research, health, and making a difference in peoples' lives. Their energy and enthusiasm were contagious. They mingled with the students, networked with the judges, and enjoyed listening to the presentations of the current students. Allison Roggenburg said, "It blew me away, the scope of topics that were covered." Each maintains a special connection to YES. As Aman Prasad said, "It was fantastic—a reinvigorating reminder of why I fell in love with public health in the first place."



Front Row: Elizabeth Shaw, Georgetown University; Justin Petrillo, Yale University; Katrina Diaz, The University of Michigan; Julie Rechel, University of Richmond; Bevin Cohen, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University. **Back Row:** Andrew Illif, University of Missouri Kansas City; Will Slack, Williams College; Allison Roggenburg, The University of Iowa; Aman Prasad, Cornell University.

YES National Event Photo Gallery

Washington D.C.
April 4–7, 2008



"The competition is great – it recognizes the students' talents and gives them such great opportunities. The judges they meet are scholarly researchers, and the competition shows the value of research and helping the world. This is how we take the first step."

—Nalini Bhat, mother of Utsav Bhat



Young
Epidemiology
Scholars

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