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Contact: Richard Bowdon, Executive Director, cell 919-439-7759, rbowdon@ssp.org

Innovative Science Curricula Awarded Prizes

Faculty from Johns Hopkins University (JHU), Purdue University, and North Seattle College (NSCC) recognized for outstanding STEM curricula

SEPT. 26, 2014 - The Summer Science Program (SSP), an educational nonprofit, has announced the winners of its New Curriculum Prize: Dr. Tracy Furutani (NSCC) and Dr. Elana Fertig (JHU) for their Marine Metagenomics proposal, and Dr. Mark Hall (Purdue) for his biochemistry based Anti-fungal Drug Discovery proposal.

Michael McKay, President of SSP, noted that excellent proposals were received from across the United States. "These curricula will challenge the most gifted high school students to do real research in exciting new areas of science. The creativity of these educators will provide SSP new options for meeting the high demand for its unique immersion experience in hands-on science."

Each curriculum receives a \$2,000 cash prize. The authors are now eligible to apply for additional funding to fully develop their proposals into detailed curricula, over the coming year.

The winning curricula cover two different areas of science. Dr. Furutani explains: "There is much that we don't understand about microbes in the ocean; we don't even have a complete inventory of what microbes live there. But that provides a great opportunity for students to contribute to what is known about these organisms." According to Dr. Hall, "I hope to inspire students by teaching them how to do original research in biochemistry. Their results may have applications in controlling fungal diseases that destroy agricultural crops, thereby helping to feed the earth's growing population."

Funding for the curriculum prizes and development is provided by a grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation.

About the Summer Science Program: SSP was founded with the mission to inspire motivated and talented high school students to become scientists, mathematicians, and engineers, by providing them with an intensive immersion in interdisciplinary, collaborative research. For 56 years, SSP has offered a curriculum based on astronomy and celestial mechanics, which will continue on two campuses. SSP sponsored this competition with a goal of finding alternative curricula in other areas of STEM, for possible future expansion.

SSP annually attracts hundreds of applicants from around the globe to its uniquely alumni-managed summer enrichment program. The experience accelerates participants' intellectual and social development and raises their aspirations for college and career. Alumni go on to enroll at top universities with many becoming STEM leaders, teachers and innovators with significant impact on their chosen professions. A testimony to the program's effectiveness is the continuing engagement of alumni across all decades from 1959 to 2014.

SSP operates as an independent 501(c)3 non-profit, in cooperation with Caltech and MIT. www.summerscience.org

About the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation: The Moore Foundation believes in bold ideas that create enduring impact in the areas of science, environmental conservation and patient care. Intel co-founder Gordon Moore and his wife Betty established the foundation to create positive change around the world. www.moore.org

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