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ESPACE

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Student Researchers Win Numerous Awards at Contra Costa Science and Engineering Fair

Antioch, April 1, 2006:

Student astronomy researchers from Deer Valley High School's ESPACE academy presented their results and won several awards at the new Contra Costa County Science and Engineering Fair in Concord on Saturday. The new fair splits off Contra Costa County from the Bay Area Science Fair. Students from Contra Costa had to travel all the way to San Francisco to compete in past years. Five students presented research on a variety of topics and were judged by a team of scientists and engineers assembled from local business firms and educational institutions. The fair was held at Heald College in Concord. Award winners from Deer Valley High School included the following 12th graders:

Jennifer Shankey, for her project "Light Pollution in a Developing Suburban City," won a 3rd place in the 12th grade division at the fair and also received a \$200 scholarship from Chevron.

Crystal Ewen, for her project "Microvariability of AGN Target AO 0235+164," won a 3rd place in the 12th grade division at the fair and also received a \$400 scholarship from Chevron. Ewen was awarded a grant by the National Optical Astronomy Observatory's Teacher Leaders in Research Based Science Education (TLRBSE) project to use a remotely controlled telescope in New Mexico to collect her data.

Jennifer Becker, for her project "Proof of Standard Stars," won a 3rd place in the 12th grade division at the fair, won 1st place for Best Astronomy Project from the Mt. Diablo Astronomical Society (along with a \$100 cash prize), and a \$400 scholarship from Chevron. Becker's project was a spinoff of a TLRBSE project.

Brielle Hinckley, for her project "Microvariability of 4C 29.45 with the Spitzer Space Telescope and Ground Based Telescopes," won 3rd place in the 12th grade division at the fair, as well as a 2nd place \$75 prize from the Mt. Diablo Astronomical Society, and a \$750 scholarship from Chevron. Hinckley used the Spitzer Infrared Space Telescope through a program sponsored by Cal Tech's Spitzer Science Center in Pasadena and co-sponsored by the TLRBSE project.

Finally, Anne Nguyen, for her project "The Glass Ceiling Persists in Astronomy," won 2nd place in the 12th grade division at the fair, a special award from the American Psychological Society, a \$50 gift certificate from JohnMuir Health, a 2nd place \$75 prize from the Mt. Diablo Astronomical Society, and a \$750 scholarship from Chevron.

Several of the students will be submitting research to the RBSE Journal, a research journal for students sponsored by the National Optical Astronomy Observatory. Public presentations are also planned at Deer Valley High School's planetarium. Deer Valley's Earth, Space, Astronomy Center for Education academy is sponsored by the California Department of Education's Specialized Secondary Program (SSP) and uses curriculum developed by Deer Valley High School teachers, the TLRBSE program, Sonoma State University's Global Telescope Network, and the Lawrence Hall of Science's Hands On Universe program.

Contra Costa County Science and Engineering Fair: <http://www.cceconptnr.org/ScienceFair/>

For more information, go to <http://www.ESPACEacademy.com> and click the Projects link.

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