

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke



News Release

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Bladen student wins top honors at Region IV Science Fair

PEMBROKE, N.C. – Christian Ryckeley, a student at West Bladen High School, took top honors in the 29th annual Region IV Science Fair on February 20 at The University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

Ryckeley surprised himself with his project, titled “Seeing Green: Determining the Most Environmentally Friendly Light Bulb.”

“I was sure that the CFL (florescent) would win, but I guess I didn’t know enough about LEDs,” Ryckeley said. “I looked at power consumption, thermal output, bulb life and landfill disposal factors over a five-and-a-half year period.”

Ryckeley won a \$1,000 UNCP scholarship and advances to state competition. His high school science teacher Ruby Stephens was thrilled.

“It was the best presentation of a science project I have seen,” said Stephens. “I am so proud of Christian.”

More than 175 science projects were entered, and the event was sponsored by a grant from Progressive Energy. The local McDonald’s franchisee and the U.S. Navy contributed prizes.

A panel of judges from UNCP and Fayetteville State University interviewed each contestant. Judges’ comments and additional information are online at: http://www.uncp.edu/chem_phy/science_fair/.

The judges said the quality of entrants was very high again this year.

“These students are really amazing,” said Dr. Martin Farley, a UNCP geologist. “I judged a whole row, and I’m going back to explore some more.”

The unofficial theme of the 2010 Science Fair was green. There were projects on solar and wind energy, soil conservation, pollution, gray water and more.

Last year's overall winner, Anne Talkington of Massey Hill Classical High School, returned with an update on her 2009 project, which won first place in state competition for water quality.

"I've added two new tests and three new upstream testing sites," Talkington said. "The water in Little Rockfish Creek is still deteriorating most likely because the (Hope Mills, N.C.) dam is slowing down the flow and causing it to stagnate."

Speaking to an audience of approximately 400 at the awards ceremony, Science Fair founder Dr. Jose D'Arruda, a UNCP physicist, encouraged contestants like Talkington to continue working to improve good projects from year to year.

It was Dr. D'Arruda's 29th event, and he remains enthusiastic.

"The Science Fair was important to my personal development in science," Dr. D'Arruda said. "These are the scientists of the future."

Among the tri-folds were many classic projects and some interesting stories too.

Mary Vorder Bruegge of Cumberland County infused science into baking sugar cookies. She is home schooled and lives on a working farm with animals, gardens and cooks, like an aunt who helped teach the young Vorder Bruegge how to cook.

"My favorite cookie was a potato flour cookie, but I was the only one who liked it," she said. "Eating the cookies was an extra benefit."

The winning recipe included cane sugar, all-purpose white flour and Mrs. Filbert's vegetable soil. It was baked for nine minutes at 375 degrees along with the standard ingredients of eggs, vanilla, salt and baking powder.

There was only one drawback.

"I baked more than 500 cookies, and my family got tired of tasting them," Vorder Brugge said. "I learned a lot."

Entries came from Cumberland, Columbus, Harnett, Hoke, Montgomery, Moore, Bladen, Scotland and Robeson counties. Chancellor Charles Jenkins said scientists are in demand.

"It is great to see so many young scientists here today," Dr. Jenkins said. "If the U.S. is to stay competitive, we will need all of you."

WINNERS:

Elementary Division Winners (*all advance to the state*) – From right: Peyton Wilber, **Boone Trail**; Taha Lohhi, Lloyd Auman Elementary; James Christianson, Long Hill; Bridget Barnes, Plain View; Nicholas Kuzma, Academy Heights; Alisha Howard, Acme Delco; Katherine Scott, Elizabethtown; and Emily Scott, **Lillington Shawtown**.

Elementary Division Honorable Mention – From right: Cayden Gregory, Lafayette Elementary; Taylor Davis, Rex-Rennert; Hailey Trudeau, Johnsonville; Kai Lightner, Warrenwood; Lauren DiMuzio, Edgewood; Glenn Cameron, Vanstory; Sarah Meares, Bladen Lakes; John Dean Alsup, Elizabethtown; Michael McDuffy, Sarah Keller, District 7 Elementary; and Caroline Hawthorne, Edgewood.

First and second place winners advance to the state:

Junior Biology Division – from left: 1st) Hayley Hall, Clarkton School of Discovery; 2nd) Charles Stewart, St. Patrick School; 3rd) Kerstyna Scott, East Hoke Middle; and 4th) Natalie Hardin, Clarkton School of Discovery.

Junior Physical Science – From left: 1st) Chris Smith, **Coats-Erwin Middle**; Meredith Randolph, **Western Harnett Middle**; 3rd) Abby Norris, Clarkton School of Discovery; and 4th) Adam Rutland, Clarkton School of Discovery.

Junior Earth Science – From left: 1st) Phillip Martin, **Western Harnett Middle**; 2nd) Cassie Hancock, Clarkton School of Discovery; 3rd) Victor Tavera, East Hoke Middle; and 4th) Allison Morris, Clarkton School of Discovery.

Junior Technology – From left: 1st) Lindsay Davis, East Middle School; 2nd) Mary Talkington, St. Patrick's; 3rd tie) Ben Peery, **Harnett Central Middle**; 3rd tie) William Porter, East Hoke Middle; and 4th) Jonah Ussery, St. Patrick's.

Senior Technology – From left: 1st) Russell Ross, Flora MacDonald; and 2nd) Whiton Odiorne, Cornerstone Christian.

Senior Earth Science – From left: 1st) Anne Talkington, Massey Hill Classical H.S.; 2nd) Christian Ryckey, West Bladen H.S. and 3rd) Alina Alderman, Cornerstone Christian.

Senior Physical Science – From left: 1st) Emily Allen, Massey Hill; and 2nd) Trenton Alford, Scotland H.S.

Senior Biology – From left: 1st) Breonna Green, Academy of Living and Learning; 2nd) Julia Furois, Massey Hill; and 3rd) Lauren DeBruier, Cornerstone Christian.

Other awards:

Navy Award – Senior Division: Christian Ryckley, West Bladen, and Anne Talkington, Massey Hill; Junior Division: Vistor Tavera, East Hoke Middle.

McDonald's Award (\$500) – Russell Ross, Flora MacDonald Academy.

Stockholm Junior Water Prize – Anne Talkington, Massey Hill, and Breonna Green, Academy of Living and Learning.

Biotechnology Award – Emily Scott, Elizabethtown Middle.