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KIDS SCIENCE CHALLENGE

LAUNCHES YEAR #2 OCTOBER 1, 2009

National Science and Engineering Competition
for Third to Sixth Graders, funded by The National Science Foundation



(Accord, NY, September 9, 2009) Created by Jim Metzner and funded by a four-year grant from The National Science Foundation, the Kids' Science Challenge will continue to offer elementary school age children the opportunity to practice real science and work directly with cutting-edge scientists and engineers. Students are asked to propose an original question, problem or experiment that relates to the group of scientists involved with the competition. Winning students in each category will then have the opportunity to meet and work with these scientists, in addition to winning great prizes. This is Metzner's fifth NSF grant.

Jim Metzner is the award-winning radio producer of Pulse of the Planet, which offers listeners sound portraits of Planet Earth, heard each weekday on over 320 public and commercial stations around the world. More than one million listeners of the show will be able to follow the progress and results of the Kids' Science Challenge on Pulse of the Planet's broadcasts. "Over 770 students entered last year's competition, which surpassed our expectations," stated Jim Metzner. "With the help of this year's partners, and as word travels about how exciting last year was, we plan to do even better. We are fortunate to have an equally fascinating assortment of scientists and fields of study this year."

Participating scientists and challenges in Year 2 of the Kids' Science Challenge include:



Bio-Inspired Designs - using nature to give us ideas for new inventions. The winner in this category will work with scientists and engineers at UC Berkeley and UC Merced to create a new product or idea, inspired by the natural world. *Birds inspired airplanes; seed burrs were the inspiration for Velcro!*



Imagining Sports on Mars
Working with engineers from NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, CA; the budding scientist(s) will come up with a game suitable for playing on the mysterious Red Planet. *Low-gravity frisbee, anyone?*



Detective Science
Future Columbos will work with scientists from the Forensic Science Department at Syracuse University to create an experiment where they employ the scientific techniques used in the science of detection to solve everyday mysteries. *So who really did leave the bathroom light on?*

"Kids have a natural tendency to want to understand things, and that's the foundation of science," stated Doug Vakoch of the SETI Institute, who worked with one of last year's KSC winners. "The challenge facing educators and parents is to tap into that inherent curiosity, allowing children to be active guides to their own learning."

Third to sixth graders will be able to enter the competition from October 1, 2009 to February 28, 2010. Information and downloadable entry forms will be available at www.kidsciencechallenge.com. Students can enter as individuals or in collaborative teams in the classroom and after school. In addition, the website offers games, fun videos, information about last year's winners, ideas for great science fair projects, lesson plans and other resources for teachers.

The first 1,000 entrants will receive free science activity kits. Winners' prizes will include a week at Space Camp, an exclusive VIP tour of the San Diego Zoo, a week at a Pali Adventures Camp, in addition to receiving microscopes, Zoobs and other great science kits and toys.

Participating organizations include 4-H, the Girl Scouts of the USA, and the Coalition for Science After School. Ask KSC scientists questions on WoogiWorld.com, a fun educational website for kids. KSC educational materials are developed in collaboration with WVIZ/PBS ideastream®.