

## PRESS RELEASE

### OVER 700 YOUNG SCIENTISTS TO COMPETE EACH YEAR FOR HONORS AT THE CENTRAL UTAH SCIENCE & ENGINEERING FAIR

When you were young the thought probably never entered your mind to wonder if redheads would be extinct by the year 2100. How about whether or not super absorbent polymers, the spongy stuff in diapers, could reduce slope erosion and mudslide slumps? No. Well maybe you wondered if grass clippings could be made into fuel or how fast dinosaurs ran? No? hummmmmmm.

There are kids who wonder about all these things and more. They will likely be our future scientists and the Central Utah Science & Engineering Fair gives them a place to show off their knowledge and inquisitive natures. In fact, more than 700 young scientists and inventors showcase their research projects, experiments and inventions each year at the Fair. Students in grades 5-12 from the southern end of Utah's Wasatch Front compete for over \$30,000 in cash awards and scholarships as well as the opportunity to represent Central Utah at the Intel International Science & Engineering Fair, the world's largest pre-college science competition.

Dr. John Gardner, director of the BYU Microscopy Lab and faculty in the Integrative Biology Department, directs the fair. Lisa Clarke, a joint employee of the BYU Public School Partnership and the McKay School of Education, manages the day-to-day work to develop the fair and students' abilities to compete.

The top six individual projects and top three team projects in the senior division compete each year at the Intel International Science & Engineering Fair, where 1,300 students from around the world compete for \$3 million in scholarships and prizes. In 2006, senior Shannon Babb, a participant in the Central Utah Fair since the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, was a top winner of the Intel Fair, attending that year's Stockholm International Youth Science Seminar during the Nobel Prize Ceremonies in Sweden.

The Central Utah Science & Engineering Fair is largely supported through funds and staffing provided by the David O. McKay School of Education and the BYU-Public School Partnership. The fair is held at the BYU Conference Center. Other sponsors include Intel, Pacific Corporation, and the BYU colleges of Biology and Agriculture, Engineering and Technology, and Physical and Mathematical Sciences.

Fair policies are coordinated through affiliation with the Intel International Science Fair as well as the BYU Public School Partnership Governing Board. The Central Utah Science Fair Advisory Committee consists of BYU Faculty, District Science Coordinators and schoolteachers.

*The Central Utah Science & Engineering Fair is open to all students in Alpine, Jordan, Nebo, Provo, and Wasatch School Districts who are recommended by their district fair officiators. For more information about the Central Utah Science and Engineering Fair, or interviews with contestants, please contact Dr. John Gardner at 422-2202, Lisa Clarke at 422-1987 or Steven Baugh at 422-1908.*