



TEAMWORK FOR EXCELLENCE

P L A N O
Independent School District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fifteen Plano ISD Students Named Semifinalists in National Siemens Science Competition with Two Awarded as Regional Finalists

Plano, TX – October 31, 2016. On October 18, fifteen Plano ISD students were announced among 498 of their peers across the country as semifinalists in the prestigious Siemens Science Competition. Plano ISD semifinalists were: Brian Nguyen, Plano East Senior High School; Alexandru Spiride, Plano East Senior High School; Team: Adhya Beesam and Shriya Beesam, Plano East Senior High School; Team: Yesh Doctor and Kshitij Sachan, Plano East Senior High School; Joycelyn Yiu, Plano Senior High School; Team: Burzin Balsara and Malav Shah, Plano Senior High School; Ritvik Annam, Plano West Senior High School; Brian Ho, Plano West Senior High School; Nicky Wojtania, Plano West Senior High School; Team: Wenyao Li and Jesse Zou, Plano West Senior High School; Team: David Yue, Jasper High School and Afeefah Khazi-Syed, (Harmony School of Innovation, Fort Worth).

From this group of 498 semifinalists, 96 will continue on to the next level of competition as regional finalists. This elite group includes two students from Plano ISD -- twins Adhya and Shriya Beesam, IB World School students at Plano East Senior High School. Their research project is also a personal passion; with an uncle who struggled with schizophrenia, which was not diagnosed at an early stage, and after his tragic death they saw the need for study in the area of mental health.

When asked what advice they had for other science fair participants, they both said, “just don’t give up. Don’t think it’s too complicated or too hard. We thought our project was really complex, and we didn’t know what to do sometimes, but we thought [there is] no harm in trying.” They also mentioned that science fair projects should not be just about the competition. “Don’t just pick something you think will win. Your project should be about your motivation to explore and find out. Research what truly inspires you.”

Shriya and Adhya will continue competing as regional finalists in one of six regional competitions virtually hosted over three consecutive weekends in November. Winners of the regional events will then advance to the final phase of the competition. National Finals will be held at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., in December where \$500,000 in scholarships will be awarded, including two top prizes of \$100,000. A complete list of finalists and their projects will be available at www.siemens-foundation.org preceding each regional event held in November.

About the Siemens Foundation

The Siemens Foundation established the Siemens Competition in Math, Science and Technology in 1999. The competition is the nation’s premiere science research competition for high school students and seeks to promote excellence by encouraging students to undertake individual or team research projects. It fosters intensive research that improves students’ understanding of the value of scientific study and informs their consideration of future careers in these disciplines.

About Plano Independent School District

The Plano Independent School District (Plano ISD) (www.pisd.edu) endeavors to foster the highest level of student learning. The mission of Plano ISD is to provide an excellent education for each student. Plano ISD is located 20 miles north of Dallas, Texas and serves the residents of approximately 100 square miles in southwest Collin County, including 66 square miles in the city of Plano, northern portions of the cities of Dallas and Richardson and parts of the cities of Allen, Parker and Murphy. Plano ISD employs more than 6,500 staff members who serve more than 55,000 students in 72 schools and 11 service facilities. Plano ISD schools empower students to be able to adapt to new learning and career opportunities throughout their lives, collaborate with, and contribute to, the global community and to be disciplined and creative in their thinking.

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