

Two Delaware Students Advanced to International BioGENEius Challenge in Washington, D.C.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (June 28, 2011) – Officials from the state of Delaware congratulate all the finalists and winners of the International BioGENEius Challenge, a competition for high school students who demonstrate an exemplary understanding of biotechnology through science research projects.

Achille Tenkiang, a junior from The Charter School of Wilmington, was named as one of 10 U.S. finalists to advance to the international competition this week for his research on the effects of nitrate concentration on microbial fuel cells.

Priyen Patel, a junior from Sussex Technical High School, was chosen as the U.S. National BioGENEius Challenge Media Awardee for his work on the most effective filtration of pharmaceuticals in our water supply, and his ability to communicate science effectively. He is participating on a media tour to promote the BioGENEius Challenge and encourage more young scientists to become involved in biotechnology research.

“High school sports may be between seasons but the competition to cultivate the top minds in science and engineering never stops,” said Governor Jack Markell. “Achille and Priyen are clearly leading the way forward. They’ve earned our congratulations, our pride and a place in state’s rich legacy of innovation and scientific excellence.”

“We are proud and excited for Achille and Priyen to have this experience with the BioGENEius Challenge,” said Kelvin Lee, director of the Delaware Biotechnology Institute. “The students worked very hard on their research, prepared well for the competition and deserve this honor.”

At the Local, U.S. National and International competitions, students are evaluated on the quality of their research and display, as well as on their responses to questions relating to their scientific knowledge and potential commercial applications of their research. Jaewoong Yoo, a junior from the The Charter School of Wilmington, was also a finalist at the national level.

“Delaware’s students here at the National and International BioGENEius Challenges performed extremely well in the competition illustrating the strength and depth that Delaware has in the life sciences,” said president at Delaware BioScience Association. “We thank AstraZeneca, the Delaware Biotechnology Institute and the many volunteers for their support providing the opportunity for our finalists Achille, Priyen and Jaewoong and all the other Delaware students who competed.”

“Most alternative fuel sources are only circumstantial solutions to the grave problem facing society. Microbial fuel cells provide an array of options to power our future,” said Achille Tenkiang. “I’d like to thank the Delaware Biotechnology Institute for giving me an opportunity to share my research with

others. It was a tremendous experience to represent my state and school at the national and international competitions. It was really awesome!”

Judges selected the top four winners from among 14 finalists today at the [2011 Biotechnology Industry Organization \(BIO\) International Convention](#) in Washington, D.C. The 2011 winners of the International BioGENEius Challenge were: Prarthana Dalal from Shawnee Mission East High School in Leawood, Kan.; Nathan Kondamuri from Munster High School in Dyer, Ind.; David Campeau from Mayo High School in Rochester, Minn.; and, Jenna Pappalardo from Satellite High School in Merritt Island, Fla.

The International BioGENEius Challenge is organized by the Biotechnology Institute, the national organization dedicated to biotechnology education, and sponsored by Sanofi Pasteur, the vaccines division of the sanofi-aventis Group, a leading global pharmaceutical company, and Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceutical Research & Development, L.L.C. (J&JPRD), one of the Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies. The local Delaware competition was sponsored by AstraZeneca and the Delaware Biotechnology Institute faculty and staff.

Additional quotes:

U.S. Senator Tom Carper (D-Del): “I am proud that these bright young students from Delaware were among the 10 U.S. finalists to compete globally in the BioGENEius Challenge. The Delaware science community is once again proving the First State is a hub for excellence in the life sciences and biotechnology.”

U.S. Senator Chris Coons (D-Del): “Encouraging our students to take an interest in the sciences is imperative to ensuring we train the next generation of innovators who will help the U.S. compete globally. Delawareans should be proud of this year’s International BioGENEius finalists for their outstanding research in biotechnology. I applaud their work and am excited to see their future research endeavors.”

U.S. Representative John Carney (D-Del): “Congratulations to Achille and Priyen for their outstanding performance in this year’s National BioGENEius Challenge. The skills that they showed today in science, math, and technology are critical to a world-class education, and our nation’s future economic success. I wish Achille and Priyen the best of luck going forward. They are great examples of the creative and innovative young minds that will ensure a bright future for Delaware and the nation.”

About the Delaware Economic Development Office

The Delaware Economic Development Office is an executive state agency responsible for attracting new investors and businesses to the state, promoting the expansion of existing industry, assisting small and minority-owned businesses, promoting and developing tourism and creating new and improved employment opportunities for all citizens of the State. Visit dedo.delaware.gov. Follow DEDO on Facebook or Twitter @DEDOgov.

About the Delaware Biotechnology Institute

The Delaware Biotechnology Institute is a partnership among government, academia and industry to help establish the First State as a center of excellence in biotechnology and the life sciences. The

Institute mission is to facilitate a biotechnology network of people and facilities to enhance existing academic and private-sector research, catalyze unique cross-disciplinary research and education initiatives, and to foster the entrepreneurship that creates high-quality jobs.

About the Biotechnology Institute

The Biotechnology Institute is an independent, national nonprofit organization dedicated to education about the present and future impact of biotechnology. Its mission is to engage, excite and educate the public, particularly students and teachers, about biotechnology and its immense potential for solving human health, food and environmental problems. For more information, visit www.biotechinstitute.org.

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