

February 2, 2010
For Immediate Release

Debbie Honeycutt
The Neurosciences Institute
10640 John Jay Hopkins Drive
San Diego, CA 92121
858-626-2020

Audeo Charter School 12th Grader Wins 2nd Annual San Diego Regional Brain Bee

Omar Shahrior, a senior from the Audeo Charter School, competed with 45 students from 23 local high schools and came out the winner of the second San Diego Regional Brain Bee Competition held at The Neurosciences Institute on Saturday, January 30th.

Omar will go on to represent the San Diego area at the National Brain Bee Competition to be held on March 19th and 20th, 2010 in Baltimore, Maryland. He took home a trophy and a \$500 gift certificate to the UCSD bookstore, and will also receive 2 round-trip tickets to the National Competition with a three night hotel stay.

Samvit Ramadurgam, a 12th grader from Torrey Pines High School was 1st runner up and received a \$100 gift certificate to the UCSD Bookstore. All participants received t-shirts, a take-away bag of goodies, and a certificate of participation. They competed in front of an audience of parents, siblings, teachers, and neuroscientists.

The Brain Bee is a live Q&A competition which tests students' knowledge of brain function and dysfunction, physiology and chemistry. Using "Brain Facts," a text developed by the Society for Neuroscience and the Dana Foundation, all students answered three randomly picked questions during the First Round. Students were partnered with a neuroscientist and a graduate student over lunch, which was served on the Institute's rooftop terrace. The 11 finalists were announced after lunch and also included Alex Alim (Canyon Crest Academy), Leo Zhou and Nick Alteri (Scripps Ranch High), Rebecca Koppel (Patrick Henry High), Priya Bisarya, Caroline Yu and Praneet Mylavarapu (Torrey Pines High), Jordan Lynn (Heritage Christian), and Nali Gillespie (Mountain Valley Academy). Each was eliminated after they missed three questions in the Final Round.

The competition was sponsored by Life Technologies, The Thomas C. Ackerman Foundation, The Neurosciences Institute, the San Diego Chapter of the Society for Neuroscience, and the UCSD Temporal Dynamics of Learning Center. Dr. Nicholas Spitzer, Professor of Biology at UCSD acted as Master of Ceremonies, with Dr. Andrea Chiba, professor and researcher in UCSD's Neurosciences Graduate Program, Dr. Holly Cline,

professor at The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI), and Dr. Peter Welch, Director of Research & Development at Life Technologies, acting as judges.

The all-volunteer committee from TSRI, Autism Speaks, UCSD faculty and student body and The Neurosciences Institute had been working since last September to make this event a success and to motivate local youth to learn about the brain, capture their imagination and inspire them to pursue careers in biomedical brain research.

For additional information, contact Debbie Honeycutt at 858-626-2020 or honeycutt@nsi.edu

This Brain Bee© is an officially sanctioned event of The International Brain Bee ©. All rights reserved.