



The Journal of Young Investigators 2nd Annual Virtual Poster Session: Special Feature
Selina Dobing, Editor-in-Chief

The Journal of Young Investigators is proud to announce the success of the second annual Virtual Poster Session (www.jyi.org/virtualposter). Undergraduate students participated in this one-of-a-kind event, demonstrating the variety and quality of research that can be found around the world.

To take part in the competition, students submitted an online video of themselves presenting their research in poster format. All applicants were also required to submit a registration form and abstract. Judges were then given the difficult task of scoring the poster presentations by presentation style (including the organization, clarity and comprehensiveness of the presentation), and presentation content (e.g. the validity, significance and overall view of the science behind the project). Although the research and presentations of all the undergraduate submissions greatly impressed our judges, they chose two grand place winners and three honorable mentions. I am honored to announce the winners here:

First Place: Anneke Tucker

Oregon State University

Inhibition of α -Amylase and α -Glucosidase Activity by Bioflavonoids: Implications for Carbohydrate Metabolism and Type-2 Diabetes Mellitus

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSsrDqP_9bs

Second Place: Daniel Anstett

University of Toronto

Early Development of Foliose Lichen *Parmelia sulcata* on Cover Slips

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QKOMDQkbFXQ>

First Honorable Mention (Tie): Stephanie Chen

University of Michigan – Ann Arbor

Reconstructing Montana Paleoecosystems using the Phytolith Fossil Record: Creating a Modern Reference Collection

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sXAGCYAH3Ic>

First Honorable Mention (Tie): Alaina Raymer

Saint Leo University

Correlating Video Games to Dream Recall Frequency (DRF)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfv36aILHyE>

Third Honorable Mention: Skandha Harshita

Narayana Medical College

Endoscopic Management of Two Nasal Pathologies

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FknfX34P_nI

Our grand prize winner Anneke will receive a free subscription to the journal *Science*, as well as a JYI Prize Package. Daniel, our second place winner, will also receive a JYI Prize Package. In addition to this, the biographies of all of our Virtual Poster Session winners are featured in this article. Please take the time to read about these motivated and dedicated undergraduate students.

First Place: Anneke Tucker

Oregon State University

Anneke Tucker is a senior in BioResource Research in the College of Agricultural Sciences at Oregon State University. She has spent the last year working in the Linus Pauling Institute in the laboratory of Dr. Balz Frei, Ph.D., the Principle Investigator and director of the LPI. Anneke assisted the lead researcher on the project, Dr. Meltem Yilmazer-Musa, Ph.D. in the investigation of bioflavonoids and their role in dietary inhibition and digestion throughout the summer and fall. The main reason that Anneke chose the project is because she is interested in human digestion and digestive disorders, and through the research has developed a passion for the role that bioflavonoids and micronutrients play in the human body. She is currently working on her application to medical school, and plans to apply in the spring.

Anneke has also used her college experience to participate in the National Student Exchange to Texas A&M University, which she says helped her appreciate intra-national cultural diversity, and more importantly find her calling in human health and medicine. Prior to her semester in Texas, Anneke studied Spanish at the University of Cantabria in Santander, Spain for 10 weeks as part of her Spanish Minor. Anneke's other interests include volunteering for the Oregon FFA Association, to which she dedicates over 700 hours each year, as well as volleyball, volunteering at Community Outreach, Inc., and shooting sporting clays with her fiance, whom she will marry in the fall of 2011.

Second Place: Daniel Anstett

University of Toronto

Daniel Anstett is a fourth year ecology and evolutionary biology student at the University of Toronto. His research interests include tropical ecology, plant/insect interactions, lichen development and large mammal conservation. Outside of school he enjoys running, photography, scuba diving, and model UN. He has traveled extensively doing volunteer work and fieldwork in South East Asia, China, Nepal, Ecuador and recently South Africa where he worked on large mammal and lion distributions.

In Canada, Daniel is active member of the U of T community and recipient of the Millennium Scholarship. He is the communications director of the Ecology and Evolutionary Student Union and is also a member of the board of directors of NCEP (Nepali Children's Education Project) an NGO that fundraises for and grants scholarships to allow poor Nepali children access to education. Daniel is passionate about research and plans to do a Ph.D. on plant/insect interactions or plant diversity and eventually become a professor.

First Honorable Mention (Tie): Stephanie Chen

University of Michigan – Ann Arbor

Stephanie Chen is a sophomore Program in the Environment major and Ecology & Evolutionary Biology minor at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor. She has broad interests in ecology, conservation, and environmental change and hopes to pursue a career in scientific research in the future. With her research advisors Selena Smith and Nathan Sheldon, Stephanie is working on a reference collection of phytoliths (microscopic silica bodies in plants) for use in identifying fossil phytoliths. She is also reconstructing the paleoecosystem of a field site at Madison-Buffalo Jump, Montana using the fossil phytolith and carbon isotope records.

First Honorable Mention (Tie): Alaina Raymer

Saint Leo University

My name is Alaina N. Raymer and I am a senior at Saint Leo University studying Psychology. I will be graduating with my Bachelor's degree in May of 2011. This past year, I have been working on a two part study involving video games, dream recall frequency, and aggression output in dreams. This research will continue until I start graduate studies in September of 2011. The first part of the research was presented in JYI's Virtual Poster Session and won this award. The second part deals with trying to understand aggression levels in dreams and how they are related to video game play. I plan to continue this line of research as well as work on alcohol and drug prevention programs targeted at college-level students. My graduate studies will focus on the latter.

Completion of this research and presentation were overseen by Professor Silvia Hunkins, M.Sc. She has provided assistance, support, and guidance throughout the entire project and continues to do so throughout this remaining semester. I cannot thank her enough for all the help she has provided over the past year and I look forward to our continued collaboration.

Third Honorable Mention: Skandha Harshita

Narayana Medical College

Skandha Harshita received her education at Narayana Groups of Institutions, Nellore, India. One of her hobbies is classical singing, and she is inquisitive, which has probably led toward her research activities. Skandha credits her mother for teaching her traditional cultural practices and moral values for life.

Skandha is an enthusiastic participant in community activities, such as the National Social Service, blood donation camps, HIV awareness campaigns, breast-feeding week celebrations, and Pulse Polio programs.

Very interested in Community Based Research (CBR) and in particular vaccine preventable diseases, Skandha believes in research for better health in the community. She has presented papers at the 2009 Association of Surgeons of India Conference, the 2010 Tamilnadu and Pondichery State Chapter of Indian Association of Pediatric Surgery Annual Conference at Chennai, and a poster at the Third World Congress of Pediatric Surgery.