



St. Mary's County Science and Engineering Fair

2024 Annual Report

INTRODUCTION

This year, 2024, was another excellent year for the St. Mary's County Science and Engineering fair. We were able to successfully more than double the number of student projects from last year, and sent a significant number on to compete at the regional level in PG County. Once again, we also had a student win the Grand Award at the Prince George's Regional Science and Engineering Fair, and move on to compete at the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in Los Angeles in May. We are grateful for all the support the Fair received and would like to recognize all the judges, students, and parents for all their hard work which made this fair such as success. We would also like to say how much we appreciate our great sponsors who more than tripled our funds and were instrumental in making our fair such a great success this year.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY FAIR

This year's Science and Engineering Fair was held on Saturday, January 27, 2024, at Great Mills High School. It was originally scheduled for Friday, January 19 at the Southern Maryland Autonomous Research and Technology (SMART) building but, due to inclement weather, it had to be moved to our backup date and location at Great Mills High School. We had a total of 107 Middle and High School students participating. This was a welcome increase in participation from the previous year in which there were only 49 participants.

This year, we decided to try holding the fair on a Friday instead of Saturday. This decision was derived from feedback we received from previous fairs from the students, teachers and parents regarding conflicts with extracurricular activities on Saturdays. We were able to reserve the SOMD Higher Education Center SMART building for a Friday fair and were able to work with the schools to make the fair a field trip for the students. Unfortunately, the fair fell on the only snow day of the entire school year. Due to moving the fair to the following Saturday because of weather, we lost around a dozen student projects because of schedule conflicts. This coming year we once again plan to have the fair on a school Friday.



Students participated in 13 separate categories. All first and second place winners were offered the chance to move on to the next level and compete at the Prince George's Regional Area Science and Engineering Fair. Senior Grand award winners at the Prince George's Fair then move on to compete at the highest level: The Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF), which was held this year in Los Angeles, California. In total 34 St. Mary's County projects competed at the regional level, and one moved on as a Finalist at ISEF.



SPECIAL AWARDS

Special Awards Judges evaluate student projects on criteria different than the Category Judges. Over \$3200.00 in cash and scholarships, plus other prizes, were given out by both local and international institutions. We want to thank all of the Special Award judges and their sponsors for making this a very successful year.



GRAND AWARD

For the 2024 St. Mary's County Science and Engineering Fair, there were a total of four Grand Award projects. Two for the Junior Division and two for the Senior Division.



PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY REGIONAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FAIR

Our Fair had a total of 34 projects which moved forward to compete in the Prince George's County Regional Area Fair. With help from our generous sponsors, The St. Mary's County Science and Engineering Fair Board pays all the registration fees for those students progressing. This ensured these students were not responsible for paying for the opportunity to compete at the next level.



The Regional Fair was held on March 16, 2024 at Charles Herbert Flowers High School. Our students from St. Mary's County excelled at the Regional Fair this year. We had many Category Winners and one Senior Grand Award Winner.

In the Junior Division we had three category 1st place awards, two 2nd place awards, five 3rd place awards, and six Special awards. The Senior Division won seven category 1st place awards, five 2nd place awards, two 3rd place awards, two honorable mentions, nineteen Special awards, and one Grand Award. Out of 34 students sent to this fair, 26 placed in their category. This is an outstanding achievement and we are proud of our students.



INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FAIR (ISEF)

One St. Mary's County student, Aarav Sharma won the Grand Award at the Prince George's Regional Area Science Fair. This allowed him to compete at the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair from May 13-17, 2024 in Los Angeles, California



Aarav's Project was titled "Sticky Styrofoam". He competed against more than eighty other regional and national fair winning projects from all over the world. We are proud that he represented St. Mary's County so well at the highest level!