

BRAVO!



September 2011

Kansas students, educators and schools are among the best in the nation and we want to salute their accomplishments. The Communications Office at the Kansas State Department of Education will regularly publish a list of happenings in Kansas schools. If you know of a specific award garnered by students, teachers, programs, schools, or districts, please let us know so that it may be included in our publication. Although it may not be possible to include all awards sent to us, we offer our congratulations and best wishes to the students and educators in our state.

Kathy Toelkes, Director
Communications and Recognition Programs

The **National Merit Scholarship Corporation** named three Topeka area students as winners of the National Merit college-sponsored scholarships. **Sam Teeter** of **Topeka High**, **Alex Rankin** of **Topeka West**, and **E-Fei Wang** of **Washburn Rural** join more than 2,900 other college-sponsored award recipients announced in May. College-sponsored awards provide between \$500 and \$2,000 annually for up to four years of undergraduate study.

Newsweek recently released their list of **America's Best High Schools**, naming five Kansas schools in the top 500; **Shawnee Mission East** (#326), **Blue Valley North** (#340), **Shawnee Mission South** (#426), **Blue Valley** (#465), and **Shawnee Mission Northwest** (#492). Schools were chosen based on graduation rates, national test scores and other self-reported statistics.

The **Kansas Horse Council Foundation** awarded \$700 scholarships to 10 students at a ceremony this past June. **Jay Rietcheck** of **Rexford**, **Natalie Russell** of **Auburn**, **Lathan Wiggins** of **Eureka**, **Chelsea Lutz** of **Topeka**, **Bobbie Jo Horocofsky** of **Manhattan**, **Erin Eckels** of **Manhattan**, **Brittany Winsor** of **Wamego**, **Levi Brozek** of **Sylvan Grove**, **Liz Jaax** of **Wichita** and **Mariah Woolsoncroft** of **Salina** were this year's recipients.

Prarthana Dalal, a **Shawnee Mission East High School** senior, won the **International BioGENEius Challenge** this summer for her exemplary understanding of biotechnology through science research projects. She was among 14 students from the U.S., Canada and Western Australia who competed in this year's event. Winners were announced at the **2011 BIO International Convention**. She will receive an award of \$7,500. Congratulations, Prarthana!

We'd love to hear what your students and faculty are achieving! Please send submissions to:

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(continued)

Sahara Keith from **Highland Park** was chosen by the **American Chemical Society's Summer Experience for the Economically Disadvantaged program** to study chemical research at **Kansas State University** this summer. Keith was nominated for the program, along with **Dakie Washington** of **Manhattan High School**, because of her involvement with Upward Bound, a federally funded enhancement program for economically and educationally disadvantaged high school students.

The **Leavenworth School District** donated 300 surplus student desks and 150 chairs to the **Joplin School District** after six of Joplin's school buildings were destroyed by an EF-5 tornado in May. With the help of Leavenworth High School students and USD 453 staff members, the surplus furniture was loaded and transported to Joplin in early August to help Joplin start the 2011–12 school year on time.

Wichita schools nearly doubled the number of schools meeting standards set by the State Department of Education in both reading and math, up from 33 last year to 60 this year! In total, 42 elementary schools, one K–8 school, five middle schools, four high schools and eight alternative schools **met AYP targets** on tests administered this spring. Great job!

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