

## Shreveport Times

### Six area students await news in prestigious competition

Six of the seven state semifinalists are from either Caddo or Bossier schools.

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#### On the list

The six area students chosen as semi-finalists in the Siemens Westinghouse Competition:

**Madison Beasley** -- mentored by Dr. Steven Conrad; "Analysis of Pressure Losses in the Hemodialysis Access Circuit Using Finite Element Analysis."

**Emily Bouso** -- mentored by Dr. Lisa Schrott; "Effects of Postnatal Withdrawal from Oxycodone on the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA axis)."

**Taylor Conrad** -- mentored by Dr. John Clifford; "XAF-1 Sensitizes Cell to TRAIL induced Apoptosis."

**Candiss Hamric** -- mentored by Dr. Karen Stokes; "The Cooperation between Hypercholesterolemia and CMV in Generating Microvascular Inflammation."

**Huang Huang** -- mentored by Dr. Jun Chung; "Role of curcumin (an active ingredient in turmeric and curry) as a novel anti-carcinogenic agent in inhibiting the motility of breast cancer cells."

**Alexander Parmater** -- mentored by Dr. Andrew Yurochko; "Human cytomegalovirus Manipulation of Phosphatidylinositol 3, 4, 5 Triphosphate Kinase and Bcl-2 Proteins Prevents Apoptosis in Monocytes."

**Regional Finalists names will be announced on the Siemens Foundation website today.**

See results for yourself at the <http://www.siemens-foundation.org/>

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By Mary Jimenez

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As images of the cell cycle, compounds and enzymes monopolized the thoughts of six area high school seniors, judges for a national math, science and technology competition are pondering their final decision.

Seven students in Louisiana, and nearly 300 nationwide, made it to the semi-finalists round out of a field of about 2000 applicants in the Siemens Westinghouse Competition.

Today they find out if they are one of only 30 students chosen to continue on to regional competition.

The results will be posted on the Siemens Foundation website, [www.siemens-foundation.org](http://www.siemens-foundation.org), the sponsor of the annual competition.

"It's safe to say the first thing I'll check Monday morning is the website," said Benton High School senior, Alexander Parmater, whose research looked into one very specific aspect in the pathogenesis of the human cytomegalovirus (HCMV).

Six of the seven Louisiana students making it to the semi-finals come from either Caddo or Bossier parish high schools. The other five semi-finalists from the area include: Madison Beasley, Caddo Magnet; Emily Bouso, Airline; Taylor Conrad, Caddo Magnet; Candis Hamric, Haughton and Huang Huang, Caddo Magnet.

Parmater, like five other semi-finalists in the competition are part of the Science and Medicine Academic Research Training program.

SMART is a unique program for seniors in Caddo and Bossier parishes in cooperation with the Biomedical Research Institute and LSU Health Sciences Center, which has seniors working alongside researchers in an

area of interest. This year 11 students from dozens of applications are chosen and in June they begin an 11-month journey into real life research in the labs of the LSUHSC.

SMART has expanded Parmater's future.

"I really had no idea that there were so many specific areas of research that you could go into," said Parmater, who's applied to the Air Force Academy and would like to go on to medical school after his four years there.

Students in the SMART program have historically done well representing the state at the semi-finalist level, a few have made it to the regional competition.

That says a lot of about the value of program says Terrie Johnson, K-12 Science Curriculum Coordinator for Bossier Schools.

"It's a requirement of the program to write the research paper and present them," Johnson said.

Huang is the only student of the six that is not in the SMART program, but she is no stranger to research. Huang's father is an assistant professor of chemistry and her mother is a research technician in anatomy and physiology at the Health Science Center. Huang has also participated in the LSUHSC's Jumpstart Program.

"There were a lot of classes I wanted to take my senior year and I didn't have room in my schedule for SMART," explained Huang, who still wanted to enter the competition and searched out a professor that would help her. "I looked for a professor whose research was something I was interested in and then contacted him to see if I could work with him."

Huang has known for quite a while she's wanted to be both a physician and clinical researcher.

"Clinical health care can't be separated from research, they go hand in hand," Huang said.

All the students had to write and enter a research paper, but if they make it to regional or national finals competition they will also have to give a 12-minute oral presentation and face a question and answer session from a panel of professional scientists. Students can earn college scholarship awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$100,000 as well as earning money for their schools.

Airline student Emily Bouso is ready, either way.

"It's been a great experience," said Bouso, who is looking into attending the University of Louisiana Monroe for its pharmacology program. "Whatever happens, happens."