



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Bob Kopach, Media Relations, 312-852-0132, bob@soinc.org

TOP U.S. STUDENTS COMPETE IN THE 30th ANNUAL SCIENCE OLYMPIAD NATIONAL TOURNAMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

ORLANDO — The University of Central Florida (UCF) will host more than 7,000 students, educators and parents from all 50 states during the 30th Annual Science Olympiad National Tournament on May 16-17, 2014. One of the nation's most prestigious science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) competitions, Science Olympiad brings together 120 winning middle school and high school teams advancing from state-level competitions this spring. Rigorous hands-on, building and lab events led by experts from government agencies, top universities and Science Olympiad state chapters cover topics in physics, epidemiology, astronomy, chemistry, meteorology and engineering.

“The University of Central Florida is delighted to host the Science Olympiad and so many young innovators from all 50 states and Japan,” said UCF President John C. Hitt. “Congratulations to all the students for earning the right to compete with the best future scientists of America.” Each gold medal winner in a high school-level event will receive a one-time, \$30,000 scholarship to the University of Central Florida.

In 2010, 2012 and 2013, champion teams from the Science Olympiad National Tournament were invited to Washington, DC, for President Obama's White House Science Fair. For the third year in a row, Science Olympiad welcomes a Global Ambassador Team from Japan to the National Tournament. Since 2009, Science Olympiad has worked with the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) and the Ministry for Education (MEXT) to share best practices and science content. In 2014, JST hosted its 3rd Annual Japan High School Science Championships (JHSSC), crowning eight winners from Mie Prefectural Ise Senior High School. The Grand Prize for the competition is a trip to visit the National Tournament, where Japanese students will meet their American peers and participate as guests in selected Science Olympiad events.

UCF facilities will be home to a full day of spectator events (free and open to the public) on Saturday, May 17. Teams will compete in challenges such as Helicopters, a flight endurance contest powered by rubber-band engines; Robo-Cross, a precision robotics event; Mission Possible, a Rube Goldberg device using energy transfers

to complete a task; and Wheeled Vehicle, a test of a car's speed, estimation and accuracy. On Friday and Saturday, the US Air Force Rapid Strike Flight Simulator and the US Army NHRA Show Car will be in Parking Lot D1, just off the Memory Mall, and a STEM Expo in the Engineering Building Atrium will feature a variety of hands-on corporate and UCF department exhibits on Friday from 9am to 2pm. Check out the lineup of events at: http://www.scienceolympiad2014.com/schedule_master.html

Local sponsors of the 2014 Science Olympiad National Tournament include the University of Central Florida, Duke Energy and Revolver Maps. Science Olympiad is supported nationally by Combined Federal Campaign, ArcelorMittal, Lockheed Martin, FOX, Texas Instruments, US Air Force, US Army ROTC, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Discovery Education 3M Young Scientists Challenge, DuPont, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Ward's Science, ACE Hardware, the NBC Universal Foundation, University of Texas Institute for Geophysics (UTIG), VWR Foundation, Academy of Model Aeronautics, Chandra X-Ray Center, Investing in Communities, MAKE Magazine, NASA and Society for Neuroscience.

Science Olympiad is a Chicago-area-based national nonprofit organization founded in 1984. It is dedicated to improving the quality of K-12 STEM education, increasing student interest in science, creating a technologically literate workforce and providing recognition for outstanding achievement by both students and teachers. More than 200,000 students on 7,000 teams from all 50 states competed in 380 regional, state and national Science Olympiad tournaments last year.

The University of Central Florida is a metropolitan research university that ranks as the second largest in the nation with nearly 60,000 students. UCF's first classes were offered in 1968. The university offers impressive academic and research environments that power the region's economic development. UCF's culture of opportunity is driven by its diversity, the Orlando environment, history of entrepreneurship, youth, relevance and energy. For more information visit <http://news.ucf.edu>.

For UCF inquiries, please contact Zenaida Gonzalez Kotala, UCF News & Info, Zenaida.Kotala@ucf.edu or 407-823-6120

For Science Olympiad inquiries, please contact Bob Kopach at bob@soinc.org or (312) 852-0132
