

# Texas Workforce Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE:** April 6, 2016

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Lisa Givens

**PHONE:** 512-463-8556

## **Texas Middle and High Schools Showcase Innovative Young Scientists at Texas Science and Engineering Fair**

*17 Austin-area students earned awards at the 30th annual statewide competition*

- Students from Austin and Pflugerville win top prizes.
- For a full list of all Science Fair winners by category and city, please visit: <https://txsef.org/news/Winners>.
- For a downloadable photo gallery of all winners, please visit: <http://j.mp/2016-TESF>.

SAN ANTONIO—More than 1,200 bright young Texans vied for prizes last weekend at the [Texas Science and Engineering Fair](#), a competition that brings together top science fair winners from across the state. The event was hosted by [The University of Texas at San Antonio \(UTSA\)](#) at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, March 31-April 2. The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) has co-sponsored the competition for 15 consecutive years with the ExxonMobil Foundation.

Syamantak Payra, a senior at Clear Brook High School in Friendswood was named Best in Show in the senior division. Kevin Meng, an eighth grader at Robinson Middle School in Plano, received the top junior division honor.

“The Texas Science and Engineering Fair showcased the wonderful creativity of students across the state as they competed for recognition in 20 different categories,” said TWC Chairman Andres Alcantar. “I congratulate all of the regional and statewide winners, whose continued work in STEM fields will lead to innovative solutions for real world issues facing Texas. I thank all the volunteers on the advisory committee and around the state who worked hard to make this year’s event a success and encourage others to join us in building another exceptional event for 2017 competitors.”

Students competed in two divisions—junior (grades six through eight) and senior (grades nine through 12)—in one of 20 categories. In addition to Grand Award winners in each division and Best of Show, awards were presented to first-through third-place honorees in each category. The fair offered students the opportunity to earn their way to national and international science fairs. Many of the junior division students learned that they will have the opportunity to compete at a Broadcom MASTERS (Math, Applied Science, Technology, and Engineering for Rising Stars) national science fair. Twelve of the senior division winners secured a chance to compete at the [Intel International Science and Engineering Fair](#) in Phoenix in May.

“Events like the Texas Science and Engineering Fair help spark new passions for young Texans,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Employers Ruth R. Hughs. “We are committed to providing a setting in which outstanding students can showcase their work in the STEM fields.”

First and second place winners from the science fair’s senior division were awarded a scholarship to attend the [Texas Governor’s Science and Technology Champions Academy](#), a weeklong residential summer camp, also sponsored by TWC, which will be held this summer at Texas A&M University.

“This event brings out the best and the brightest students of all backgrounds,” said TWC Commissioner Representing Labor Julian Alvarez. “Our hope is that these young people become inspired to continue to use those skills once they enter Texas’ workforce.”

###ljg

*The Texas Workforce Commission is a state agency dedicated to helping Texas employers, workers and communities prosper economically. For details on TWC and the services it offers in coordination with its network of local workforce development boards, call 512-463-8942 or visit [www.texasworkforce.org](http://www.texasworkforce.org). To receive notifications about TWC programs and services subscribe to our [email updates](#).*

---

Texas Workforce Commission ☐512-463-8942 ☐[www.texasworkforce.org](http://www.texasworkforce.org) ☐Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Relay Texas: 800-735-2988 (TDD) or 711 (Voice)