

centerline

CEE is pleased to announce that a 2021 CEE Research Science Institute (RSI) alumna is among the top 10 winners in the Regeneron Science Talent Search competition for high school seniors. **Amber Luo**, Ward Melville High School, East Setauket, New York, was awarded third place and \$150,000 for developing a software, RiboBayes, which identifies key regions known as “ribosome pause sites” along a cell’s mRNA transcripts that regulate protein synthesis.



Ms. Luo was selected from 1,804 highly qualified entrants to the Regeneron Science Talent Search, all of whom completed an original research project and an extensive application process. Three other 2021 RSI alumni were among the top 40 finalists: **Max Bee-Lindgren**, Decatur High School, Decatur, Georgia; **Steven D. Liu**, Shady Side Academy, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and **Ella Wang**, Basis High School, Chandler, Arizona. Each received \$25,000 in scholarship funds. Twenty-four RSI alumni were among the top 300 scholars and each received \$2,000.



Research Science Institute

For the first time RSI will have more women than men. In 1984 only 11 women participated in RSI. This year it is 55% women. CEE is committed to the education of women worldwide. CEE has guided record numbers of women into STEM careers in the U.S. CEE President **Joann DiGennaro** has negotiated agreements to make sure women have equal access to STEM education globally as well. For example, CEE’s marquee Research Science Institute was the first to bring STEM education studies to girls in Saudi Arabia at the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST). In 2015, the Saudi Aramco Research Science Initiative at the University of Dammam encouraged high-achieving high school girls to pursue their interest in STEM. The Center does not consider gender in the RSI selection process; selection is based on academic merit, demonstrated leadership, and scientific achievement.

(Continued on Page 3)

CEE launched STEM Lyceums, its exciting new program for underserved urban and rural high school students, with a kickoff event in February. More than 500 students attended. The keynote speaker was **Aimee Rogstad Guidera**, Secretary of Education



for the Commonwealth of Virginia. She thanked CEE for its leadership in STEM education.

“The skills that you are investing in are the ones that are in most demand right now,” she said. “By investing in educators and investing in students, you are insuring that students are on a pathway to make sure that doors are open to them to go on to higher levels of education.”



CEE Trustee **Gilbert T. Bland**, President and CEO of the Urban League of Hampton Roads, Founder and Chairman

of The GilJoy Group, also was a guest speaker. Mr. Bland has been an owner/operator of restaurants for over 30 years. He is among the nation’s largest African American franchisees. He has pursued a lifelong passion by supporting and advocating for opportunities for the underserved throughout the educational pipeline.

(Continued on Page 6)

Save the Date! CEE hosts a new virtual series in the field of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning. The first session, “AI Defined and AI Trends,” is Thursday, June 9 from 12-1:30 p.m. EDT. The second session, “AI Uses and AI Ethics,” will be on Thursday, June 16 from 12-1:30 p.m. EDT. RSVP at www.cee.org/webinars.

Public Rejects Attempts to Water Down Gifted Education



On February 16, 2022, three San Francisco school board members were unceremoniously expelled from their seats in a landslide (70%+) recall election. A few issues were involved, but one major factor in the removal was their attempt to replace merit-based admissions with a lottery at the district's

extremely prestigious Lowell High School. The recall is encouraging, because it shows that even in a racially diverse and famously liberal city, the vast majority of voters recognize that proper education for high achievers is a higher priority than presenting a superficial appearance of equity through a ham-handed balancing of ethnic percentages.

Consider that, according to a poll released by the Institute for Educational Advancement in 2019, at least 64% of Democrats, 67% of Independents, and 61% of Republicans say federal funding for gifted students needs to be increased. It can be deduced that voters of all stripes generally reject the premise that gifted education must be sacrificed at the altar of equity.

It is long past time for all education policymakers to acknowledge some simple realities, as most of the general public has. Children of the same age are often in vastly different places academically. Accelerating everyone and accelerating no one are non-solutions that maximize students' average distance from their learning ideal. The necessity for differentiation is obvious to everyone when it comes to students that are behind the curve—remedial education is understood to be essential—why is this not obvious when it comes to students who are ahead? A related question, to which the answer is painfully obvious: *what is the percentage of students that should stop learning and languish in classes where they already know the material?*

Gifted education may not be identical to mainstream education, but it is imperative for the same reason: to educate children to their potential. The only fundamental difference between ceasing gifted education and ceasing all education is the number of children affected. This is why efforts to homogenize education are guaranteed to produce poor results. Nonetheless, such efforts

have been seriously pursued at an accelerating rate, in New York City, San Francisco, and other locales, as well as the Commonwealth of Virginia, where the Virginia Mathematics Pathways Initiative (VMPI) was expected to keep all students on the same narrow math path for nearly their entire journey through public school. VMPI has apparently been sidelined, but this does not remove all concern. Nobody should be interested in watching the Virginia Department of Education toy with defaulting on its responsibilities to students, especially the students with the greatest potential for creating technological and economic growth.

Gifted education can take many forms, but it does not have to be complicated, controversial, or expensive, and generally it is not. Allowing students to accelerate in a subject can be as simple as walking into a 7th grade classroom instead of a 6th grade classroom for an hour a day. Furthermore, the observation that gifted schools cost money is as irrelevant as it is true. All schools cost money. Should all schools be closed?

Deep blue New York City rejected candidates that were interested in eliminating gifted schools, instead electing Eric Adams, who proposed expanding the number of selective high schools. In fact, the misguided and unpopular efforts in San Francisco, New York City, and Virginia have all failed with the same end result: anti-gifted politicians were replaced. Hopefully this provides a lesson for present and future elected officials. Instead of threatening gifted education, how about scaling it up and giving it the serious attention it deserves? As for parents and other concerned citizens, the next time gifted education comes under attack, you know what to do.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joann P. DiGennaro".

Joann P. DiGennaro, CEE President

CEE WELCOMES NEW STAFF

CEE welcomes new staff members **Benny Davis**, IT System Administrator, **Olivia Krachenfels**, Program Assistant, **Peter M. Pober, PhD**, Executive Liaison to the President, and **Travis Williams**, TEP Manager, to help further its mission of nurturing careers of excellence and leadership in STEM for academically talented high school and college students and for providing TEP and Lyceums for rural and urban teachers.

RSI (CONTINUED)

The RSI Selection Committee, comprised of distinguished science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) professionals, met in March 2022 to select students chosen for academic merit, demonstrated leadership, and scientific achievement. Selection was also based on standardized test scores, high school grades, essay submissions, teacher recommendations, and demonstrated potential to become future STEM leaders. 51 outstanding U.S. students were selected, along with 32 young scholars from Bulgaria, Canada, China, Indonesia, India, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Vietnam. The 2022 RSI will be held June 26 to August 6, 2022 at MIT. The Center's RSI program continues to be nationally and internationally recognized, with nations waiting for an opportunity to send scholars to this prestigious, cost-free program.



CEE is also pleased to announce that **Mark Kantrowitz** (RSI '84) will serve as the 2022 RSI Director. Mark is a nationally recognized expert on student financial aid, scholarships, college savings plans and student loans. He earned Bachelor of Science degrees in mathematics

and philosophy from MIT and a Master of Science degree in computer science from Carnegie Mellon University. Mark also serves as a CEE Trustee and is a recipient of the 2021 Lieberman Award for Outstanding Achievement in STEM.

Last year, when MIT canceled all summer programs on campus, RSI met the challenge virtually to provide student participants with high-level STEM research, with most of the projects mentored by RSI alumni. Regeneron awarded \$1K checks to the top 5 written projects and top 5 oral presentations as chosen by a distinguished panel in respective STEM fields. To date, nearly 3,000 scholars, representing all U.S. states and more than 55 nations, have attended the RSI. The program remains cost-free to all students competitively selected to attend.

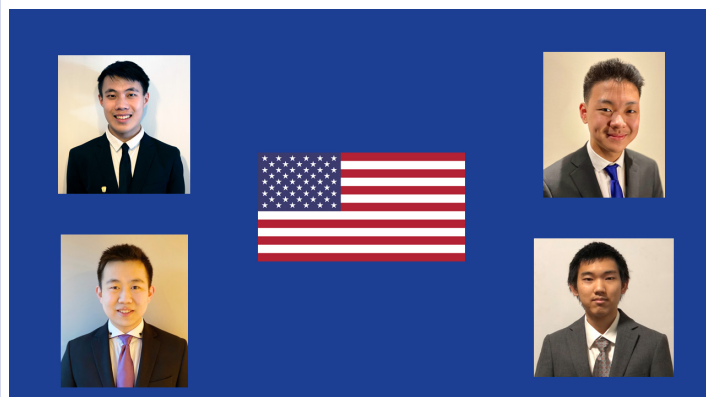
USA BIOLYMPIAD

USA BIOlympiad

CEE is pleased to announce that the 2022 USA Biolympiad (USABO) National Finals will be held at Marymount University on its Arlington, Virginia campus from May 28 to June 9, 2022. The 10-day intensive education and training program will focus on student's learning of advanced biological concepts and exacting lab skills. Nearly 11,000 students from across the nation logged in to the online USABO exam in February through a partnership with Art of Problem Solving (AoPS). USABO provided guidelines and held a webinar on how to prepare for the exam. Semifinals were held virtually on March 31. Twenty National Finalists will be announced on May 5. The four gold medalists from USABO's National Finals will represent the U.S. at the International Biology Olympiad (IBO) in Yerevan, Armenia from July 10-18, 2022.

BIO TO HONOR 2021 USA BIOLYMPIAD TEAM

The Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) will honor the 2021 USA Biolympiad Team at its 2022 International BIO Convention to be held in San Diego, CA on June 15th. BIO is the world's largest advocacy



association representing member companies, state biotechnology groups, academic and research institutions, and related organizations across the United States and in 30+ countries. This is a most prestigious honor for CEE, USABO, and all teachers and students who participated in USABO.

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STEM LYCEUMS (CONTINUED)

"Education is the gateway to a better opportunity," Mr. Bland said. "CEE's STEM Lyceums expand the pool of candidates who can be exposed to these opportunities and continue to grow their careers."



Isabel Gallegos (RSI '17), a senior at Stanford University, spoke about the tremendous impact CEE has had on her. She is currently studying Computer Science. "I'm so grateful for RSI and CEE and for the support they provided."

CEE's STEM Lyceums are cost-free monthly virtual club meetings that engage students in discussion and exploration of STEM concepts and career trajectories.



Teacher Enrichment Program

CEE's Teacher Enrichment Program (TEP) is hosting virtual events this spring for rural and urban teachers in seven states. TEP continues to provide unique STEM opportunities for high school teachers to take back to their classrooms. Recordings of presentations for teachers are catalogued on YouTube. All TEP resources and professional development events are cost-free to participants. To date, nearly 5,000 teachers from over 1,600 schools have participated. The program has reached nearly 800,000 underserved rural and urban students to consider STEM careers. For more information, visit www.cee.org/teacher-enrichment-program.

CEE ALUMNI ACCOLADES



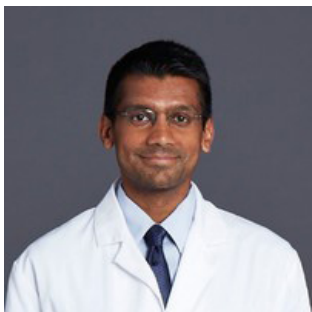
Sidharth Anantha (RSI '19) is a member of the Class of 1931E scholars at the University of Michigan, studying Aerospace Engineering and Computer Science. He is the inventor of Seeing For The Blind, an award winning device that

uses echolocation and machine learning to aid the visually impaired. He is the founder and leader of the KtByte Robotics Program, where he leads a fully student run program that teaches students how to use Arduino and build world-changing inventions.



Elizabeth Wood, PhD (RSI '01) is Founder & CEO of JURA Bio, Inc., an early-stage therapeutics start up. Wood is a visiting scientist at the Stanley Center of the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard. She currently serves on the board of Pure Home Water, Ghana. She earned an

AB in Physics from Harvard University and a PhD in Physics from the Technical University of Denmark. She also studied at MIT and was a post-doctoral fellow at Harvard's Cohen Lab.



Dave A. Chokshi, MD, MSc, FACP (RSI '98) is a Clinical Professor of Medicine and Population Health at NYU Grossman School of Medicine. He served as the 43rd Commissioner at the New York City Department of Health and Mental

Hygiene, one of the leading health agencies in the world, from August 2020 to March 2022. He led the City's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including its historic campaign to vaccinate over 6 million New Yorkers, saving tens of thousands of lives. He earned a BA in Chemistry, Public Policy, Biology from Duke University. He earned an MSc in Global Public Health, Comparative Health Policy and earned his MD at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.



Swati Goel (RSI '19) is a computer science student at Harvard University and is enlisted in the Army National Guard. She was a cast member on *Survivor 42* on CBS. Swati attended Henry M. Gunn High School in Palo Alto, California. She has three years of hands-on programming and research

experience with machine learning and app development at the Wikimedia Foundation, Northeastern University, and Stanford University.

UP AND ATOM CAMPAIGN

CEE's "Up and Atom!" 2021 Annual Fund alumni and parent campaigns were a resounding success. Alumni of the Center's RSI and USABO programs contributed nearly \$430,000 in 2021, including 83 Leadership donors of \$1,000 or more. More than 200 parents of RSI and USABO alumni gave more than \$378,000 last year, including 77 at the Leadership level. Special thanks to the 2021 Up and Atom! Alumni and Parent Committees:

Alumni Committee -- Pam Bee-Lindgren (RSI '85) (Chair); **William Ellsworth** (USABO '17/RSI '18); **Susan S. Lee**, (RSI '91); **Jed Macosko** (RSI '89); **Kelvin M. Neu** (RSI '90); **Atharv Oak** (USABO '18); **John Quisel** (RSI '88); **Rageshree Ramachandran** (RSI '90); **Evan M. Schwartz** (RSI '00); **Amy Sillman** (RSI '84); **Rich Simon** (RSI '86); and **Matthew Thrasher** (RSI '98).

Parent Committee -- Dr. Doug Humberger, CEE Trustee (Chair); **Chaim and Harriet M. Chachkes** (RSI '86); **Jin Cheng** (RSI '19); **Wendy Cheng-Shell and Doug Shell** (RSI '21); **Angela Fu** (RSI '17); **Sushovan Guha and Sarmistha Majumdar** (USABO '14 & '15); **Jerry and Jamie Horowitz** (RSI '87); **Vidya Iyer** (USABO '17 & '21); **Peng Jiang and Julie Wang** (RSI '19); **Howard and Tina Kessleheim** (RSI '91); **Yvonne Li** (USABO '18 & '19); **John Liu** (RSI '16); **John Liu and Catherine Lu** (RSI '18); **Peter and Sarah Meindl** (RSI '19); **Marli and Art Pasternak** (RSI '12); **Elizabeth Pan** (USABO '21); **Roger and Marianne Pellegrini** (RSI '11); **Michael Vogelbaum and Judy Rosman** (RSI '18); **John and Jennifer Wahlig** (RSI '20); **Sharon Wan** (USABO '21); **Susan Wildstrom** (RSI '97); and **Fang Zhu** (RSI '19).

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CEE ALUMNI REUNIONS

CEE continues to organize virtual reunions for RSI and USABO alumni. These events not only help the Center connect with alumni lost through the years, but they are a wonderful opportunity for alumni from the U.S. and other nations to network. Many participants say they have never joined



any kind of reunion before and their experience is particularly exciting. **James Schuyler**, a 1988 Rickoid and CEE's Webmaster & Alumni Liaison, is leading this initiative. Please contact him at jschuyler@cee.org if you can volunteer time to assist in this project.

ABOUT CEE

The Center for Excellence in Education, a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit, was founded in 1983 by the late **Admiral H.G. Rickover** and **Joann P. DiGennaro**, President of the Center. The Center's mission is to nurture high school and university scholars to careers of excellence and leadership in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and to encourage collaboration between and among scientific and technological leaders in the global community. CEE sponsors Research Science Institute (RSI), USA Biolympiad (USABO), Teacher Enrichment Program (TEP), and STEM Lyceums. CEE provides these programs cost-free to participants.

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