

### **AIPG/CCGO Geoscience Awards, California State Science Fair**

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On behalf of the California Council of Geoscience Organizations and the American Institute of Professional Geologists, I attended the 2001 California State Science Fair to judge and present two Geoscience Awards on 22 May 2001. The Fair was held at the California Science Center, adjacent to the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. The California Science Center opened in 1998, and consists of 5½ acres of buildings and grounds. A Natural History Museum and Imax Theater anchor the facility.

Earth Sciences was one of eighteen categories represented at the Fair. Twenty eight junior division and ten senior division earth science exhibits were featured. Exhibitors qualified by placing in at least two previous local science fairs. All of the exhibits were of superior quality, making for difficult decisions by this judge.

The winner of the junior division was Emma Kelsey, for her project "Big Lagoon: Salinity vs. Time." Ms. Kelsey generated data by taking measurements while traversing Big Lagoon in a canoe over the course of a year. She was able to time the periodic Pacific Ocean breakthrough of a sand bar from her data.

Julie Gilbert was the winner of the senior division for her project "Blast of Ash from the Past!" Ms. Gilbert collected ash samples from five volcanic venues. She then analyzed the samples for chemical composition, and was able to deduce the type of volcano responsible for the corresponding sample. In a thank you letter, Ms. Gilbert said "even though this is my last year of high school, I'm not finished with my science fair project yet...I want to continue doing research on it while I'm in college...I'm really starting to get curious about what would happen to my results if I were to get several other volcanic ash samples from around the world and analyze them...Who knows where this could lead?"

Each winner received a handsome certificate, a check for \$250, and a one year subscription to TPG. I wish to express my gratitude to the AIPG Foundation, Inc. for their generous matching grant.

It was very satisfying to see such enthusiastic and scholarly earth science project exhibitors. I hope many of these young people will enter the earth sciences profession. I am already looking forward to next year's California State Science Fair.