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Pre-college students win math scholarship at national competition

By **Katie Land**, news editor

Two mathematically gifted high school students put their skills on national display this December through Oakland University's Summer Mathematics Institute, led by math professor Eddie Cheng.

The students, Randy Jia and David Lu, travelled to New York with Cheng to present their research at the Siemens Competition in Math, Science & Technology. This national competition recognizes the best and brightest high school students and provides them with an opportunity to exhibit their science research projects.

"I am very happy for our students," said Cheng, director of the program. "It is always good to see students being professional in their studies. Siemens is the premier competition in the country and I am proud that our students were able to compete successfully at this level."

The pair brought home a \$30,000 scholarship in the team category for their graph theory project, "Matching Preclusions for Augmented Cubes." Their research presents an innovative way to measure the strength of a network in the event of link failure.

Both students currently attend Detroit Country Day School and each have long lists of math and science prizes and achievements from across the region.

Cheng's students routinely place in semi-regional competition, but this is the first time that a group from OU's program has made it to the regional competition and beyond to the national level.

"The student projects over the years have been quite comparable, but this year's project has a distinct appeal to the judges as well," Cheng said. "It is a privilege to work with such smart students."

Oakland's free Summer Mathematics Institute exposes students to advanced undergraduate mathematical concepts that include probability theory, number theory, group theory, combinatorics, graph theory, statistics and linear algebra for college credit. The program provides a creative environment with a high level of mathematical activity for exceptionally talented students with a strong interest in mathematics.

Cheng, who has served as the program's director since 2002, recently received the Professor of the Year Award from the Presidents Council, State Universities of Michigan for 2009.

For more information about the Summer Mathematics Institute, visit the [Web site](#).

SUMMARY

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