

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

September 7, 2011

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Los Angeles, Calif. – Through a \$45,000 grant from the National Science Foundation, and support from NASA and the U.S. Department of Energy, Great Minds in STEM (GMiS) is proud to host its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Technical Posters Competition, showcasing the scientific and technical research of 40 undergraduate and graduate students during the 2011 HENAAC Conference, held at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort, in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, on October 7, 2011.

Finalists were selected based on two important standards used by the National Science Foundation to evaluate scientific proposals. Proposals were evaluated on *intellectual merit* – the extent which the research advances knowledge and understanding within its own field by suggesting and exploring creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts. Proposals were also evaluated on *broader impact* – the extent which the project both advances discovery and understanding while promoting teaching, training and learning, and what may be the benefits to society.

The finalists represent a diversity of ethnicity, gender, geography and institutions. Seventy percent are Latino/a and 25 percent are African American. Fifty-three percent are female and 53 percent are graduate students. In total, 33 percent attend a Minority-Serving Institution, and 48 percent attend college in Florida.

Posters will be on display for viewing and judging on Friday, October 7, 2011, from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM and 2:45 PM - 4:45 PM. Winners will be announced on Saturday, October 8, 2011, during the Student Leadership Dinner at 4:30 PM. For more information, please visit [www.greatmindsinstem.org](http://www.greatmindsinstem.org).

Finalists include:

- Mark Aguilar, Sophomore, Physics, California State University, Los Angeles
- Amie Albanese, Senior, Mathematics, University of Houston - Downtown
- Paula Algarin, Doctoral Candidate, Electrical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Jorlys I. Alvarado-Morales, Junior, Industrial Engineering, University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez
- Marvin Andujar, Senior, Computer Science, Kean University
- Alex Avendano, Sophomore, Mechanical Engineering, Iowa State University
- Edgar Bautista, Masters Student, Civil Engineering, California State University, Los Angeles

- Zachariah Blackmon, Senior, Electronic Engineering Technology, Florida A&M University
- Selasi Blavo, Doctoral Candidate, Chemical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Justin Boone, Doctoral Student, Electrical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Mariela Castellanos, Senior, Civil Engineering, California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo
- Miguel Cazares, Senior, Computer Science, Texas State University - San Marcos
- Trishelle Copeland-Johnson, Senior, Chemical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Michelle Cortes-Salva, Doctoral Candidate, Chemistry, University of South Florida
- David Cure, Doctoral Student, Electrical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Robert Donatto, Senior, Electrical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Omar Florez, Doctoral Candidate, Computer Science, Utah State University
- Enrique Gonzalez-Velez, Doctoral Candidate, Civil Engineering, University of South Florida
- Johnathan Kuskos, Senior, Computer Science, University of Houston - Downtown
- Yareni Lara-Rodríguez, Masters Student, Mechanical Engineering, University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez
- Eney Lorenzo, Senior, Industrial Engineering, University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez
- Julio Medrano, Doctoral Student, Electrical Engineering, University of Florida
- Cesar Morales, Doctoral Candidate, Electrical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Renee Oats, Doctoral Student, Civil Engineering, Michigan Technological University
- Alicia Oliver, Senior, Electronic Engineering Technology, Florida A & M University
- Dorielle Price, Doctoral Candidate, Electrical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Andira Ramos, Junior, Physics, Florida International University
- Mandek Richardson, Doctoral Student, Biomedical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Ana Rioja, Masters Student, Biomedical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Alicia Rodríguez-Yañez, Masters Student, Industrial Engineering, University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez
- Maria D. Sanchez, Senior, Chemistry, University of South Florida
- Hayde Silva, Senior, Electrical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Jose Sosa, Masters Student, Biomedical Engineering, Tulane University
- Cecilia Turcios, Junior, Chemical Engineering, Cornell University
- Innocent Udom, Doctoral Candidate, Chemical Engineering, University of South Florida
- Cristal Vasquez, Senior, Mechanical Engineering, California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo
- Guillermo Velarde, Doctoral Student, Forest Biomaterials, North Carolina State University
- Saul Villarreal, Senior, Industrial Engineering, Texas State University - San Marcos
- Maria Villarreal-Maroguin, Doctoral Candidate, Industrial Engineering, The Ohio State University
- Yessenia Yari, Masters Student, Computer Science, Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul

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