

# Austin Peay State University

## 2009-10 Middle Tennessee Science and Engineering Fair

*From the MTSEF Director...*

### 2009 – Another good year for MTSEF!

Although in the midst of a very difficult economic year, MTSEF continued to be successful. Our 123 projects registered were down from the previous year, but we did gain some new school participation. We lost one award sponsor, Dupont, to the recession, but we hope to get that company back soon.

High School Grand Prize winners Chris King and Ethan Green represented our fair well in Reno, Nev. at the ISEF. Chris received a 3<sup>rd</sup> place award in Electrical Engineering and another special award from the Army.

Tough economic times did cause the loss of the middle school national competition. Unable to find a corporate sponsor, the Society for Science and the Public canceled the middle school competition for 2009. I have not heard what the status is for 2010. Participants from our fair did extremely well in this competition.

The rules and regulations have been updated with little change from last year for MTSEF but a few changes in the ISEF forms. One small change for MTSEF is that we are allowing photos of the finalists on the projects this year. In addition, if participation increases to more than 30 per grade at the 6-8 grade level, we will probably increase the number of category awards in those grades. The caliber of projects in the entire fair has been very good these past years. If we could just get some more schools to participate. . . .

The big news is that we are having a training day again this fall at APSU for the fair and it's early – Saturday, Oct. 3! Look on the back of this newsletter for more information. Hope to see you there.

Ron Robertson  
APSU Department of Chemistry

## *The SRC and IRB*

There are many faculty here at APSU who work countless hours on our SRC and IRB committees for the MTSEF. The Scientific Review Committee (SRC) and Institutional Review Board (IRB) review and approve special projects before the fair that deal with human subjects, vertebrate animals, and many areas of hazardous substances. Their job is to make sure that the experimentation is done safely and is well supervised. The SRC also has the task of reviewing every project application before official entry in the fair. It is a tremendous task. The chair of the SRC is Dr. Sarah Schiller, 931-221-6335, [schillers@apsu.edu](mailto:schillers@apsu.edu). The chair of the IRB is Dr. Nanci Woods, 931-221-7236, [woods@apsu.edu](mailto:woods@apsu.edu).

### **Did you know –**

Not all areas of study are best served by scientific method based research. Projects in engineering, mathematics and computer science as well as theoretical projects and inventions sometimes don't fit the scientific method mold. For a description of these projects as well as many other helps on paper and abstract writing and project startup see the ISEF 2010 Student Handbook:  
[www.societyforscience.org/isef/document/hbk2010.pdf](http://www.societyforscience.org/isef/document/hbk2010.pdf)

### **Communication**

**Address:** MTSEF  
Ron Robertson  
APSU Dept. of Chemistry  
PO Box 4547  
Clarksville, TN 37044

**Phone:** 931-221-7292, R2: 221-6298, Dept: 221-7626

**Fax:** 931-221-6261 **E-mail:** [mtsef@apsu.edu](mailto:mtsef@apsu.edu) or  
[robertsonr@apsu.edu](mailto:robertsonr@apsu.edu)

**Web:** [www.apsu.edu/mtsef](http://www.apsu.edu/mtsef) R2 [www.apsu.edu/robertsonr](http://www.apsu.edu/robertsonr)

**Discussion Board:** MTSEF Board [pauling.apsu.edu/discus](http://pauling.apsu.edu/discus)

Note – The Discussion Board is a great place to share ideas and get answers to your questions. Try it out! I continue to put project ideas on it. Please post!

# Science Fair

Resources, Helps and the 58<sup>th</sup> Middle Tennessee Science & Engineering Fair

## Training Day Returns! Saturday, October 3

Need help with filling out the paperwork for special project approval? Still looking for a project idea? Then come to the MTSEF training day from 9 a.m.-noon, Saturday, Oct. 3 in room E106 of the Sundquist Science Center.

Dr. Ron Robertson (fair director), Dr. Sarah Schiller (SRC chair) and Dr. Nanci Woods (IRB chair) have already committed to presentations. Dr. Schiller and Dr. Woods will also be available until noon to give individual assistance to those who need to get SRC or IRB preapproval for projects. This is the best time to get your answers to these questions:

- Do I need preapproval?
- What forms do I need?
- Does my project involve a potentially hazardous biological agent?
- What do I need if I did my project at a university or industry?
- How do I write a risk assessment for my hazardous substance project?
- How do I write an Informed Consent Form for my human subject project?
- What do I need if I am doing a simple survey?

Presentations will also be given about project ideas. As other speakers are added, the schedule will be updated on the web site. Don't wait until the last minute! Come and get an idea for a project.

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## 58<sup>th</sup> Middle Tennessee Science and Engineering Fair Austin Peay State University March 18-20, 2010

### To register ALL projects:

Required Forms:

Entry Form with Abstract, Forms 1, 1A, 1B

Notes: Several signatures on these forms must be signed before experimentation begins. Please note this and plan accordingly.

Due Date: *Feb. 24, 2010, is the FINAL DEADLINE for the receipt of the MTSEF application form and all required ISEF forms.*

### For projects requiring special documentation:

Required Forms: the forms above plus -

See the Web site for specific forms and procedures

Important! Several of these additional forms must be completed and sent to the MTSEF IRB/SRC for approval before the project begins. Send forms 1, 1A, 1B and the necessary special forms. The IRB will review prior approvals as they are submitted. The SRC will be meeting monthly. *Jan. 13 is the FINAL DEADLINE for the IRB and SRC to receive the pre-approval forms for a project.*

### General information:

\*The schedule for this year's fair can be found on the enclosed entry form.

\*Middle schools are limited to sending three projects per grade unless 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> category awards were won in previous years. Go to <http://www.apsu.edu/mtsef> for information regarding your school. Also, please remember to complete the middle school project certification form found at the Web site.

**SEE YOU THERE!**