

Sign of spring: Science finalists picked

Ten high school girls and 30 boys last week got the phone calls they've been dreaming about: news that they'd beaten 1,541 other top science students to become finalists in the 57th Annual Westinghouse Science Talent Search.

The next stage of the competition starts March 4, when the finalists face a panel of scientists in Washington, D.C. These judges will interview the students and on March 8 announce the winner of a \$40,000 scholarship. Nine other students will receive between \$30,000 and \$10,000, and the remaining 30 finalists will each be awarded a \$1,000 scholarship. Science Service, the publisher of SCIENCE NEWS, administers the competition.

This year's projects ranged widely across disciplines, including a hurricane prediction model, a virtual cricket, and a biochemical analysis of why Korean *mandu* dumplings turn bright red during cooking. One student examined current efforts to control loosestrife, an invasive weed, by introducing a predator and discovered a ladybug that preys on the newcomer. Another finalist, who reads Russian and Ukrainian, as well as French, developed a computer model for studying how children learn languages. Five math projects made the finals, as did an astronomy study of time dilation and redshift in cosmic gamma-ray bursts.

"I think we should be very encouraged because at this very high level we are producing in America today students of

extraordinary talent," says Princeton University astrophysicist J. Richard Gott, who heads the judging panel.

The 40 finalists are:

- Arizona: Ravi Vikram Shah, Corona del Sol H.S., Tempe.

- California: Ann Kromsky, Corona H.S., Corona; James Greg Marsden, North Hollywood H.S., North Hollywood; Sohini Ramachandran, Rio Americano H.S., Sacramento; Jeremy Walter Shaw, Villa Park H.S., Villa Park.

- Colorado: Heather Margaret Matthews, William J. Palmer H.S., Colorado Springs.

- Delaware: Calvin K. Huang, Salesianum School, Wilmington.

- Florida: Carey Marie Tanner, Canterbury School, Fort Myers; Kimberly Anne Fitzgerald, Gulliver Preparatory School, Miami; Aaron M. Seider, North Miami Beach Senior H.S., North Miami Beach.

- Illinois: Travis Jeremy Schedler, Illinois Math & Science Academy, Aurora.

- Indiana: Christopher Colin Mihelich, Mayo H.S., Rochester.

- New Mexico: Stephanie Lynn Levine, Eldorado H.S., Albuquerque.

- New York: Grace Yew-Mih Lee and Keith Jarred Rotbard, Lawrence H.S., Cedarhurst; Mark Evan Abraham, Jamesville-Dewitt H.S., Dewitt; Ameet Shrirang Talwalkar, Half Hollow Hills H.S., Dix Hills; Jeremy C. Hwang, Great Neck South H.S., Great Neck; Michael Joseph Smolow, John L. Miller Great Neck North H.S., Great Neck; Parker Rouse Conrad, Collegiate H.S., New York; Jesse Keith Anttila-Hughes, Stuyvesant H.S., New York; Jonathan Adam Kelner, The Wheatley School, Old Westbury; Christopher Michael Gerson, Grace Ann Lau, Clyde Law, and Thomas Petersen, Ward Melville H.S., Setauket; Mark Anthony Grishaj, Ramapo Senior H.S., Spring Valley; Steven Mark Tobias, Syosset H.S., Syosset.

- Oklahoma: Michael Yanche Lee, Norman H.S., Norman.

- Texas: Patrick William Goodwill, Texas Academy of Math & Science, Denton; Stephen Alexander Tinnin, McKinney H.S., McKinney.

- Virginia: Paul Julius Bracher, David Hayes Marcus, and Mary Ellen Matyskiela, Thomas Jefferson H.S. for Science and Technology, Alexandria.
—S.Milius