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Week of January 18, 2010

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K–5 Deadline Extended to March 15 for Siemens We Can Change the World Challenge



There's still time for your students to make a difference in their own classrooms, schools, and communities!

Your students can “go green” and team up for the *Siemens We Can Change the World Challenge*, the nation's premier sustainability challenge where students work with a teacher or mentor to identify and create solutions to environmental problems in their own backyard.

Students will compete for a chance to win \$100,000 in grants and prizes including a chance to appear on TV, a journey on an amazing Discovery Adventure Trip, a chance to appear on the Jumbotron in New York City's Time Square and much more!

The challenge is currently open to K–8 students. All applications must be completed by **March 15, 2010**. Visit www.wecanchange.com for more information and to register for the competition.

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Teachable Moment Materials: Earthquakes

Teachable moment materials are available for the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti last week. The materials, put together by the [Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology](#), are on the American Geophysical Union (AGU) www.agu.org website.

To learn more about contributing to the relief efforts in Haiti, go to this [CNN site](#).

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Improve Your Knowledge of Physical Science

Grades 3–9 teachers: improve and refresh your content knowledge through two [NSTA online short courses](#), **Light** and **Force and Motion**. Under the guidance of Dr. Matt Bobrowsky, each week participants will meet virtually to strengthen their physical science concepts through synchronous learning. Follow up discussions are continued in an online forum, along with self-paced completion of corresponding course materials (SciPack, SciGuide, e-book, and journal articles), all contributing towards boosting your knowledge of the subject.

Force and Motion—Beginning Monday, February 1, 2010, and continuing through the following four consecutive Mondays: 2/1, 2/8, 2/22, 3/1, 3/8. The course is held from 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Eastern Time.

Light—Beginning Wednesday, February 3, 2010, and continuing through the following four consecutive Wednesdays, 2/3, 2/10, 2/17, 2/24 and 3/3. The course is held from 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Eastern Time.

Participants are eligible to earn two graduate professional development credits from the University of Idaho. For more details and to register, visit the [NSTA Learning Center](#) or e-mail ptingler@nsta.org.

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Invest in Science Education—Yours

Professional development for science educators is not a luxury. Nearly 2000 sessions, workshops, presentations, institutes and day long programs are planned for teachers and administrators, including every grade band and every discipline who attend NSTA's National Conference on Science Education, Philadelphia, March 18–21, just a few months away.

Program Strands:

- Meeting the Unique Needs of Urban and Rural Science Learners
- Connecting Content: Between, Within and Among Subjects
- Closing the Digital Generation Gap Between Teachers and Students
- Rekindling the Fires of Science Teaching and Learning

Featured speakers will stir you—you'll hear from Bill Nye about remarkable solar sail spacecraft which will be launched over several years. John Mooy, storyteller and author, will share with us, "Class, I'd Like You to Meet Mr. Einstein." Greg Marshall, National Geographic VP, scientist, inventor, and filmmaker, will lead off with "Cittercam: Science Exploration from the Wild.

[Ten preconference institutes](#) (PDI's) are scheduled on March 17 as a kickoff day of focused, content-based programs led by national professional development experts. Each full day institute (ticketed and targeted towards grade levels) such as "Issue-oriented Science: Engage, Motivate, and Educate" is followed by two days of pathways sessions during the conference.

And then there are concurrent workshops, symposia, and day long programs to learn strategies for the classroom, content knowledge on topics like light and sound, new products to use and test, and author sessions on science assessment and inquiry, to name just a few options. Visit www.nsta.org/philadelphia to view the schedule. **January 22** is our earlybird deadline, so register right

away to save the most.

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From the NSTA Calendar: Intel Schools of Distinction Awards

Does your school demonstrate 21st-century teaching and learning environments that promote excellence in math and science? Enter the [2010 Intel Schools of Distinction Awards](#) and your school could win up to \$25,000. Eighteen finalists will win \$5,000 and a trip to Washington, D.C. Six winners selected from the 18 finalists will receive an additional \$5,000 from the Intel Foundation and more than \$100,000 in products and services from the program award sponsors.

The application deadline is **February 17, 2010**. [Submit your completed application early](#) and you may win a Netbook! Early-bird drawings will be held every week in January, ending on February 1.

Visit the [NSTA online calendar](#) for more science education opportunities.

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A Closer Look at *Whiz Kids*

What does it take to be an elite scientist? *Whiz Kids*, a documentary by Tom Shepard and Tina Difeliciantonio, examines the lives of three student competitors in the Intel Science Talent Search (STS). Referred to as the “junior Nobel Prize,” Intel STS selects a few hundred semifinalists from a pool of entries numbering in the thousands. From these semifinalists, finalists are chosen; they then present their projects to the public during Intel STS Public Day at the National Academy of Science in Washington, D.C., and compete for more than \$630,000 in awards. The 2010 first-place winner will receive a \$100,000 four-year scholarship.

With such high stakes, the pressure on students is great. *Whiz Kids* profiles Intel STS 2006–2007 semifinalists Ana Cisneros, Kelydra Welcker, and Harmain Khan. Described on its website as a “coming-of-age” story whose subjects “raise questions about class, courage, personal sacrifice, success and failure, and in the process, learn as much about themselves as they do about science,” the film offers insight into the challenges the students face and their dedication to their chosen projects. Noting the U.S. students are outranked by peers in many countries, the filmmakers set out to “modify the stereotypes of young inventors” and hopefully inspire more to pursue degrees and careers in the sciences.

To learn more about *Whiz Kids*, go to [whizkidsmovie.com](#). For more information on the Intel STS from the Society for Science and the Public, visit [www.societyforscience.org/sts](#).

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Where the Talk is All About Science and Science Education

Do children really think dinosaurs are “more real?” Is Skype a useful classroom tool? Where can you find real-world scientific data for use in the science classroom?

Get the answers or post your own comments and ideas at the newly consolidated [NSTA blog](#). We pulled five existing NSTA blogs together in one place and implemented a handful of powerful blogging tools to make it easier for you to find out the latest from NSTA. You can view the entries by category if you prefer to see postings broken out into the topics formerly presented in individual blogs, or you can

click on one of the site tags to see a cross listing of posts.

Check in, noodle a few postings, puff up some umbrage when we get it wrong, pat us on the back when we get it right, and subscribe to the RSS feed to learn when we've updated the site (which will happen much more often now that all of the blogs are in the same place).

Most importantly—[participate!](#)

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Earn a Master's Degree from the University of Maryland

The University of Maryland's Master of Chemical and Life Sciences degree enhances your knowledge, increases your expertise, and advances your career. Specifically designed for middle and high school science teachers, the 30-credit, content-based program focuses on current research areas in the biological, biochemical, and biomedical sciences. Aside from laboratory experiences, the program's online format benefits the working professional with the flexibility, convenience, and accessibility that online learning affords. Dynamic faculty with academic credentials and professional experience deliver the most current knowledge and skills in an interactive environment. Find out more! [Visit our website.](#)

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And Don't Forget...

Visit our member services web page to ensure that NSTA has your current [contact information](#). And when the time comes to renew—select the "Autorenew" option!

Visit the [NSTA Science Store](#) for an outstanding array of bestselling books and teaching resources. Receive 30% off the price of the January featured book, [Girls in Science](#).

Professional development courses in your future?

Online options give you a world of choice.

Take a look at these groups offering [courses](#) for science educators!

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