Regional Students Again Having Fun With Physics

More than 5,600 students from 90 schools in Idaho, Utah, Nevada and Wyoming are expected to attend the 15th annual Utah State University Physics Day event May 14 at Lagoon Amusement Park in Farmington, Utah.

The daylong activity is designed to be an educational approach to teaching fundamental physics concepts to middle school and high school students, using an amusement park as a laboratory. More than 850 southeast Idaho students and teachers participated in events in 2003.

USU Physics Day is an education outreach activity run jointly by the USU Physics Department and the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory. Other sponsors include Boeing, Clark Planetarium, Lagoon Amusement Park, DuPont Holographic, Thiokol, U.S. Navy, USU College of Science, USU Office of Recruitment and Enrollment Services, Rocky Mountain NASA Space Grant Consortium, Idaho NASA Space Grant Consortium, Portage Environmental, TRUTech, NitroCision, Ron and Susan Warnecke, Marie Putnam and Mathsoft Engineering and Education, Inc.

"It is great to see high school students having fun and becoming attracted to science and engineering. It is a great learning experience for everyone. As Leonardo da Vinci once said, 'Learning is the only thing that the mind never exhausts, never fears and never regrets,'" said Ali Siahpush, advisory engineer/scientist and coordinator of the event for the INEEL.

Students will participate in a Colossus Colossal G-Force contest, physics bowl competition, student workbooks, and contest in demonstration design, ride design and logo design. The rides will be open from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Physics Day events are
scheduled from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Winners will be announced at an awards ceremony starting at 3 p.m. at the Davis Pavilion inside the amusement park. Last year, an estimated $50,000 in prizes and scholarships were awarded to competition winners.

Physics Day is one of several programs at the INEEL that encourages science education for students, thus ensuring a future work force that will further the long-term mission of the INEEL.

The INEEL is a science-based, applied engineering national laboratory, dedicated to supporting the DOE's missions in energy, national security, science and environmental research. The INEEL is operated for the DOE by Bechtel BWXT Idaho, LLC.

--INEEL--

Media contact: Teri Ehresman, ehr@inel.gov, 208-526-7785

04-040