



MEDIA RELEASE - 17 August 2009

AWARDS PRESENTED TO YOUNG SCIENCE STUDENTS

Fifty five top performing science students will be presented with an award by Innovation Minister Senator Kim Carr in Canberra on Tuesday (18 August).

All students gained a perfect score in the Rio Tinto Big Science Competition, a national science competition open to students from Grade 7 to 12. They are coming to Canberra from all over Australia for the presentation.

The event is organized by Australian Science Innovations, with support from Rio Tinto and the Australian National University.

Mr Toss Gascoigne, Executive Director of ASI, says that gaining a perfect score in the Big Science Competition is to place one foot on the ladder to a glittering career in science.

"These students have done brilliantly," he said. "Nearly forty thousand students entered the competition, and only 55 Grade Ten students got every question right - that's outstanding."

Mr Gascoigne said the Big Science Competition aimed to stimulate the interest of students by setting a series of questions on contemporary science issues, such as swine flu, climate change, alternative energy sources and the environment.

"We want to show that science is grappling with issues that will shape the world tomorrow. They're relevant, they're challenging and are connected to many job opportunities."

He said that Australia faces a significant shortfall in scientists, engineers, technologists and researchers. The Big Science Competition wants to get students curious about science, and stimulate their interest in further studies and possible careers.

Following the presentations, the students will tour ANU, beginning with a spectacular demonstration of bangs and flashes by Dr Peter Wothers from Cambridge University.

Dr Wothers is on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fpSMIJAIAt8>

Media are invited to attend the event.

Where: Presentation, Finkel Theatre, John Curtin Medical School, ANU

When: 11 am Tuesday 18 August

Contact: Toss Gascoigne 0408 704 442

Dr Wothers' demonstration: Physics Theatre 1, Building 38, Science Rd ANU at 1pm

Refreshments will be served.