

United States Wins Stockholm Junior Water Prize

Stockholm - Joyce Chai from the United States was awarded the prestigious 2008 Stockholm Junior Water Prize tonight in a formal ceremony in the Stockholm International Fairs and Conference Center during the World Water Week in Stockholm.

The student from Palos Verdes Peninsula High School in Rolling Hills Estates, California, received the Prize from the hands of H.R.H. Crown Princess Victoria on behalf of the Stockholm Water Foundation. She also received a USD 5,000 scholarship and a crystal sculpture.

The Stockholm Junior Water Prize is presented each year to high-school age students for outstanding water-related projects that focus on topics of environmental, scientific, social or technological importance. The international honour is given to an individual or group who, like their 30 co-competitors, has been awarded the top prize among national competitions. The National Country winners travel to Stockholm from as far a field as Argentina, Ghana and Vietnam. The official motivation of the Nominating Committee for this year's winner is:

"The project from the USA entitled 'Modelling the Toxic Effects of Silver Nanoparticles under Varying Environmental Conditions' is the winner of the 2008 Stockholm Junior Water Prize for discovering the potential toxicity of silver nanoparticles. This is a new, hardly investigated category of micropollutants, which are commonly used in industry for a variety of purposes. These particles are then released into the environment, including water bodies, without proper knowledge of their fate and potential toxicity. The remarkable level of scientific research takes steps towards understanding and quantifying the potential environmental consequences and risks of their use. This study repudiates the assertion that silver nanoparticles are more reliable and less environmentally hazardous than silver ions. This initial research questions the reliability of their use in consumer products.

The scientific impact of this investigation is extremely profound, and we expect that it will open the door to serious questioning and further studies regarding the widespread use of silver nanoparticles."

The projects "Restoration of Water Reservoirs Using Latent Phases of Aquatic Organisms, from **Alexey Shinkarev**, Russian Federation, and "Firewood Hearth Distillers for Safe Water for Vulnerable Rural Populations" from the Sri Lankan team of **R.D. Dasun Thakshala Siriwardana, Sandun Gayath, Sameera Dissanayaka and A. Sujith Madushan Silva** received honourable mention.

High-resolution photos for press are available after 22.00 Central European Time at www.worldwaterweek.org. Footage of the ceremony will be available to registered journalists at www.thenewsmarket.com/siwi. For more information, contact: Stephanie Blenckner, Acting Communications Director, SIWI, at +46 (0)8-522 139 86, stephanie.blenckner@siwi.org.

The World Water Week continues at the Stockholm International Fairs and Conference Centre until Saturday, August 23.

SIWI - Independent, Leading-Edge Water Competence for Future-Oriented Action

The Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) is a policy institute that contributes to international efforts to combat the world's escalating water crisis. SIWI advocates future-oriented, knowledge-integrated water views in decision making, nationally and internationally, that lead to sustainable use of the world's water resources and sustainable development of societies.