

Two Teen Scientists Represent Canada at International Biotech Competition in Boston

Saskatchewan's Rui Song places third for research on more nutritious lentils

BOSTON, June 19, 2012 /CNW/ - Janelle Tam, a 16-year old Waterloo Collegiate Institute student, and Rui Song, 16, a Grade 11 student from Walter Murray Collegiate, Saskatoon represented Canada at the 2012 [International BioGENEius Challenge](#) in Boston, a competition for high school students who demonstrate an exemplary understanding of biotechnology through science research projects. Janelle and Rui competed against students from the U.S., Canada and Western Australia with their ground-breaking research projects.

[Winners were announced today](#) at the keynote luncheon at the [2012 BIO International Convention](#), the largest global event for the biotechnology. Saskatchewan's Rui Song placed third for her research on lentils, which are one of Saskatchewan's largest crops and an essential, inexpensive source of protein worldwide. Rui's mentors, Dr. Kirstin Bett and Rob Stonehouse of the Plant Sciences Department at the University of Saskatchewan, say her work raises the hope of developing a new, more nutritious variety of lentil. To learn more about Rui's project, please visit <http://bit.ly/lrvD9l>

Ontario's Janelle Tam, who won first place at the national 2012 [Sanofi BioGENEius Challenge Canada](#) in May, showed that cellulose, the woody material found in trees that enables them to stand, also acts as a potent anti-oxidant disease-fighting compound. Conducted with mentor Dr. Zhaoling Yao from the University of Waterloo, her research could one day help improve health and anti-aging products, including tablets, bandaids for a wound dressing or it cosmetic cream. Her research is detailed online at <http://bit.ly/jw8mrq>.

To compete in the Boston International BioGENEius Challenge, Janelle and Rui participated in the [2012 Sanofi BioGENEius Challenge Canada](#), which has over the past 19 years given over 4,000 aspiring teen scientists access to university labs and academic mentors, encouraging the pursuit of future studies and careers Canada's fast-growing biotechnology sector. This year, more than 240 high school and CEGEP students across Canada submitted 192 projects that ranged from exploring potential new drug treatments for Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis to crops and the environment.

"As a participant since 2008, my SBCC experience has definitely changed my life," said Rui. "Not only did I receive a glimpse in the research process, I gained a new perspective on career opportunities in the biotechnology sector. My experience has shaped my future career path and motivated me to change the world for the better through research."

"In research, I get to discover what no one has found out before, which is really exciting," said Janelle. "I think this opens up a whole new field for NCC, and I'm thrilled that the scientific community believes in the potential of my research into tree particles as an eco-friendly alternative."

Commenting on the International BioGENEius Challenge, Sanofi Pasteur Canada President Mark Lievonen said: "The Sanofi Group in Canada is thrilled to see that the potential of Canadian youth is being recognized at an international level. As the founding sponsor of the Sanofi BioGENEius Challenge Canada (SBCC) 19 years ago, we believe in the potential of our youth to develop the next big breakthrough in science. I am increasingly optimistic about Canada's opportunity to truly make a difference in the world."

About Sanofi

Sanofi, a global and diversified healthcare leader, discovers, develops and distributes therapeutic solutions focused on patients' needs. Sanofi has core strengths in the field of healthcare with seven growth platforms: diabetes solutions, human vaccines, innovative drugs, consumer healthcare, emerging markets, animal health and the new Genzyme. Sanofi is listed in Paris (EURONEXT: SAN) and in New York (NYSE: SNY).

Sanofi companies in Canada include sanofi-aventis Canada Inc. (pharmaceuticals), Sanofi Pasteur (vaccines), Sanofi Consumer Health (health and beauty), Genzyme (rare diseases) and Merial (animal health). Together they employ more than 1,700 people, mainly in the greater Montreal and Toronto areas. In 2011 Sanofi companies invested \$151.7 million in R&D in Canada, creating jobs, business and opportunity throughout the country.

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