

## **British Columbia's Young Science Prodigies Recognized at Sanofi Biogenius Canada Regional Final**

**Winner of first prize to represent British Columbia at the SBC National Final in Ottawa**

**Vancouver, British Columbia** – Austin Wang from David Thompson Secondary School in Vancouver has earned top honours at the British Columbia edition of the prestigious Sanofi Biogenius Canada (SBC) competition. Austin, a grade 11 student, was chosen by the judges for his research project exploring cell bacteria as an environmentally-friendly alternative source of energy. His groundbreaking research was completed with the support of mentor Dr. Susan Baldwin, professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering at the University of British Columbia.

"I am truly honoured to win such a prestigious award and to have been selected from among such a talented group that produced some amazing projects. I'd like to thank Dr. Baldwin for all her guidance and support, and look forward to presenting my work to the judges at the Canadian final in May," said Austin Wang.

One of the country's most prestigious student competitions, Sanofi Biogenius Canada pairs exceptional young scientists with academic mentors to pursue real-world research projects, and participants have produced many promising scientific breakthroughs.

The runners-up of the SBC 2015 British Columbia regional final:

Second prize went to Nathan Kuehne, a grade 11 student at Glenlyon Norfolk School for his project exploring a self-diagnostic test for Phenylketonuria, a genetic disease in which toxic substances accumulate in the body due to a patient's reduced ability to synthesize essential compounds.

Third prize went to Lasya Vankayala, a grade 11 student at David Thompson Secondary School, for her project which examined the effect of the vitamin glutathione on alternative treatments for Parkinson's disease.

Austin Wang will now progress to the SBC 2015 National Final in Ottawa on May 25 and 26. There, winners of all nine regional SBC competitions will submit their work to a panel of Canada's pre-eminent scientists for a chance at winning the top prize: a place at the 2015 International BioGENEius Challenge in Philadelphia this coming June. Austin also receives a cash prize of \$5,000, a portion of which will go to David Thompson Secondary School. Runners-up in this year's SBC British Columbia regional competition were also awarded cash prizes ranging in value from \$1,000 to \$4,000.

### **About the Sanofi Biogenius Challenge (SBC)**

Sanofi Biogenius Canada is a national science research competition open to high school students, which since 1992, has helped almost 4,000 young Canadians pursue real-world scientific research projects that have been the launch pads to future studies and careers. Coordinated by Partners In Research, the initiative is sponsored by Sanofi Pasteur Limited, Sanofi Canada, the Ontario Government (Ministry of Research & Innovation), York University, the National Research Council Canada/Conseil national de recherches Canada (NRC-CNRC), Canadian Institutes of Health Research/Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada (CIHR-IRSC) and Genome Canada.

For more information, please visit [biogenius.ca](http://biogenius.ca), or follow SBC on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/SanofiBiogenius) (facebook.com/SanofiBiogenius) or Twitter (@biogeniusca) using the hashtag #SBC2015.

-30-

### **Media Contacts:**

Marc Holmes  
NATIONAL Public Relations  
[mholmes@national.ca](mailto:mholmes@national.ca)  
Tel. : 514- 843-2373

Mel Kern  
Partners In Research  
[mkern@pirweb.org](mailto:mkern@pirweb.org)  
Tel. : 519-433-7866 ext. 29

---

