

## **Canada's Top Student Scientist Recognized at Sanofi Biogenius Canada National Final**

**Aditya Mohan, 18, of Ottawa's Colonel By Secondary School Recognized for Novel Cancer Therapy**

**Ottawa, Ontario - May 26, 2015** – Aditya Mohan of Colonel By Secondary School in Ottawa has been awarded top honours at the national final of the prestigious Sanofi Biogenius Canada (SBC) competition. The 18-year-old grade 12 student was chosen by judges for his research project focusing on a novel cancer treatment that manipulates the common cold virus to target and selectively kill cancer cells.

Aditya's research, which was completed with the support of mentor Dr. Angela Crawley of the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, could offer numerous advantages over cancer therapies like chemotherapy and radiation, which can impact healthy cells and cause debilitating side effects.

"Cancer has affected so many families, including people who are close to me. My project was motivated by the need for a new way to diagnose, monitor and treat this disease with lower dosages and a more targeted approach," he said. "I am truly honoured to win Sanofi Biogenius Canada. This competition has been an incredible opportunity to pursue my research and take this project to the next level."

One of the country's most prestigious student competitions, Sanofi Biogenius Canada pairs exceptional young scientists at the high school level with academic mentors to pursue real-world research projects. These enriching partnerships have resulted in many promising breakthroughs across various scientific fields.

Hosted by the National Research Council of Canada (NRC) in Ottawa, the competition's national final featured the winners of all nine Sanofi Biogenius Canada regional competitions across the country. The nine finalists presented their research projects to a judging panel of esteemed members of the scientific community, including Dr. Jim Richards, R&D Director and Vaccine Program Leader at the NRC; Dr. Pierre Meulien, President, Genome Canada and Dr. Robert Tsushima, Associate Dean, Research and Partnerships, Faculty of Science, York University.

"What distinguishes Sanofi Biogenius Canada from other science fairs and competitions is that it's a real-life experience for the participants, who pursue groundbreaking research projects with leading-edge researchers. Not only is Aditya's work a tribute to the culture of innovation that programs like these help foster in our country, but it also reinforces the importance of mentorship in a young scientist's career," said Mark Lievonen, President of Sanofi Pasteur, one of the competition's two title sponsors.

"Our mission at Sanofi is to shape tomorrow's health, and programs like Sanofi Biogenius Canada are an essential stepping stone for Canada's next generation of scientists and researchers. We offer our heartiest congratulations to Aditya and look forward to following his future achievements," said Jon Fairest, President of Sanofi Canada, the competition's co-title sponsor.

Aditya receives a cash prize of \$5,000, a portion of which will go to Colonel By Secondary School. He also receives a prestigious student internship at the NRC. Aditya will now progress to the 2015 International BioGENEius Challenge in Philadelphia in June, where he will submit his work to a panel of pre-eminent international scientists.

Runners-up in this year's national SBC competition were awarded cash prizes ranging in value from \$1,000 to \$4,000.

Second prize went to Austin Wang, a grade 11 student at David Thompson Secondary School in Vancouver, British Columbia. Austin earned high praise for his research project exploring cell bacteria as an environmentally-friendly alternative source of energy, which was completed with the support of mentor Dr. Susan Baldwin, professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering at the University of British Columbia. As the second-place winner, Austin has also earned a trip to the 2015 International BioGENEius Challenge.

Third prize was awarded to Catharine Bowman from St. Mary Catholic Secondary School in Hamilton, Ontario, for a project that focuses on a treatment for the inflammatory disease Chronic Lymphedema, which affects up to 140 million people worldwide. Catharine's project was supported by mentor Dr. Pierre-Yves von der Weid, researcher in Inflammation Research in the Department of Physiology and Pharmacology at the University of Calgary.

Justin Lessard-Wajcer from Jean-de-Brébeuf College in Montreal earned both the competition's Commercialization and Professionalism prizes. The Commercialization prize recognizes the project with the most commercial potential and viability, while the Professionalism prize recognizes the student with the highest commitment to professionalism and etiquette. Justin's research focuses on the 'CLARITY' technique, which

creates highly detailed pictures of the brain in order to investigate the link between heart disease and neurological diseases.

#### **About Sanofi Biogenius Canada (SBC)**

Sanofi Biogenius Canada is a national science research competition open to high school students. Since 1992, SBC 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, 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.

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