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NEWS RELEASE

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UM-Saint Louis announces 2009 STARS graduates **Students spent summer conducting research with St. Louis scientists**

More than 70 high school students spent their summer working with some of the top scientists in the greater St. Louis area. These aspiring student scientists conducted a wide range of research, studying everything from the mating activities of female water snakes to new methods for early cancer detection.

On Friday (July 17), they graduated from the 2009 Students and Teachers as Research Scientists (STARS) program at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. The program is sponsored by Pfizer Inc., LMI Aerospace Inc. /D3Technologies and the Solae Company. UMSL also partnered with the Donald Danforth Science Center in Creve Coeur, Mo., Saint Louis University, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and Washington University in St. Louis, all of which provided research opportunities for the STARS participants.

"UMSL is delighted to take the lead as host of the STARS program. We share a commitment to pre-collegiate science education with our partners," UMSL Chancellor Tom George said at the STARS confirmation ceremony. "All of us are working toward one goal -- providing the critical scientific manpower needed to move the St. Louis region forward."

Kenneth Mares, director of the STARS program at UMSL, said that students with bachelor's and advanced degrees in science, math and engineering are needed more today than ever by American businesses wanting to stay competitive.

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stars graduate/ADD ONE

And yet, efforts to bolster the number of graduates in the science, technology, engineering and math fields are failing, according to past reports by the Associated Press. The mission of STARS is to help generate interest in those fields.

“We are delighted to provide this opportunity where senior faculty members share their experiences as they, along with their research teams, direct students in significant research projects,” Mares said.

For more than 20 years, UMSL has hosted this intensive summer research program for academically talented junior and senior high school students. The STARS program introduces participants to the various aspects of the scientific enterprise as practiced by successful scientists in academic, private or corporate research institutions.

Each STARS student chooses one research project from a variety of outstanding opportunities. Fifty-three faculty members from the participating academic institutions and two scientists from the Danforth Center volunteered for this project. In addition, Pfizer Inc. and the Solae Company identified research scientists to make career presentations.

This year’s program, “Experiencing the Scientific Enterprise,” was held June 8 through July 17 at UMSL. In addition to conducting research and presenting papers, students took part in career workshops, attended lectures by leading scientists from the St. Louis science community and engaged in social activities such as attending a St. Louis Symphony Orchestra performance, bowling, movies and barbeques.

The 2009 STARS graduating students and their schools are:

Affton High School: Sarah Huynh

Chaminade College Preparatory: Caleb Small

Clayton High School: Tom Evashwick, Gabrielle Inder, Meredith Redick, Ali Sehizadeh, Rebecca Steinberg, Sneha Viswanathan

Crossroads College Preparatory School: Theresa Butcher

Edwardsville Senior High School: Parish Patel

Eureka High School: Dina Ghosh, Monica Sharma

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stars graduate/ADD ONE

Francis Howell High School: Rishikesh Mohan, Benjamin Sammons
Hazelwood West High School: Travis Knight
John Burroughs School: Michael Lublin, Shamaita Majumdar, Amit Roy, Tanvi Subramanian
Ladue Horton Watkins High School: David Bruns-Smith, Lukas Bundonis, Saya Jacob, Shaun Vaidyan
Lafayette High School: Chelsea Shapland, Marta Wells
Lindbergh High School: Audrey Dang
Lutheran High School North: Bria James
Maplewood-Richmond Heights High School: Melinda Siebert
Marquette High School: Sneha Bagavandos, Pawol Flasiniski, Eric Hsu, Phillip Hsu, Ravi Kasinadhuni, Nevatha Mathialagan, Kunal Mathur, Casie Wang
Mary Institute and Saint Louis Country Day School: Sofia Aronson, Zachary Gornet, William Johnston, Rishub Keelara, Alexander Markov, Michael Rizzo, Edward Stanley
Mascoutah Community High School: Matthew Benson, Allyson Renth
(Maryville) Missouri Academy of Science, Mathematics and Computing: Shivani Singh
O'Fallon (Illinois) Township High School: Anjali Shekar
Parkway Central High School: Liron Ganel, John Lee, Kenny Lu, Charles Qin
Parkway North High School: David Goldfeld, Jodie Guller
Parkway South High School: Diane Shen, Cara Welker
Parkway West High School: Sonia Boodram, Lubov Ezerskiy
Rivermont Collegiate (Bettendorf, Iowa): Roshan Babu
St. Louis University High School: Andrew Kastner, Anthony Melillo, Benjamin Minden-Birkenmaier, Frank Schumacher, Quin Thames
Timberland High School: Adam Brandt, Adam Hockman
Villa Duchesne Oak Hill School: Elizabeth Godar
Visitation Academy: Anchana Dominic, Rupsha Ghosh
Wentzville Holt High School: Sereno Adams, Amy Hacker
Westminster Christian Academy: Luke Thampy, Thomas Winter

Call Ken Mares at 314-516-6155 or e-mail him at maresk@umsl.edu for more information about the STARS program.