



**Lisette Estrella-Henderson, Superintendent of Schools**  
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## **NEWS RELEASE - For immediate release**

**Date:** March 17, 2021

**Organization:** Solano County Office of Education

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### **SCOE Presents 2021 Virtual Science & Engineering Fair Awards**

**FAIRFIELD, CA** – Solano County Office of Education’s 2021 Solano County Science and Engineering Fair was held as a virtual competition this year due to the pandemic. The event for Solano students culminated in a virtual award ceremony. The competition had three divisions: elementary (grades 3-5), middle school (grades 6-8) and high school (grades 9-12). Each division has three categories: Earth Science, Physical Science, and Life Science.

Careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) have grown tremendously. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, between 2010–2020 employment in science and engineering was predicted to grow by 18.7%, compared to 14.3% for all other occupations. This rapid growth has created a STEM worker shortage in the U.S. To address this, the Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) is joining widespread efforts to boost interest in STEM among students.

“Our goal is to inspire more students to consider a career in science, engineering, or a related field. The fair is an excellent opportunity for our elementary, middle and high school students to apply science and engineering skills to investigate problems, gather and evaluate evidence, and develop conclusions. Events like the Science and Engineering Fair have the potential to spark a lifelong interest in a related field.” said Solano County Superintendent of Schools, Lisette Estrella-Henderson.

The following are the Solano County Science and Engineering Fair winners announced at the virtual ceremony on March 16<sup>th</sup> at 6:00PM:

#### **Elementary Division**

##### Life Science

1st place – Taylor Cabatic & Jessel Rafael, Academy of 21st Century Learning

2nd place – Cassandra Colby, Cooper Elementary School, Vacaville USD

3rd place – Anne Wilde, The Academy of 21st Century Learning

##### Physical Science

1st place – Grace Lewis, Scholars Together, Vacaville USD

2nd place – John Mallory, Cooper Elementary School, Vacaville USD

#### **Junior Division**

##### Earth Science

1st place – Isis Fernandez, Green Valley Middle School, Fairfield-Suisun USD

2nd place – Emily Chew, Green Valley Middle School, Fairfield-Suisun USD

3rd place – Ryan Boothe, Green Valley Middle School, Fairfield-Suisun USD

##### Life Science

1st place – Siena Guerrero, Green Valley Middle School, Fairfield-Suisun USD



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2nd place – Ineza Marekani, Green Valley Middle School, Fairfield-Suisun USD  
3rd place – Aarya Sharma Vats, Green Valley Middle School, Fairfield-Suisun USD

Physical Science

1st place – Ava Rianne Bayawa, Green Valley Middle School, Fairfield-Suisun USD  
2nd place – Brandon Wei, Green Valley Middle School, Fairfield-Suisun USD  
3rd place – Jennifer Petsko, Green Valley Middle School, Fairfield-Suisun USD

**Senior Division**

Earth Science

1st place – Abigail Malech, Vanden High School, Travis USD  
2nd place – Natalyce Zehms, Vanden High School, Travis USD  
3rd place – Kealani Goss, Vanden High School, Travis USD

Life Science

1st place – Jasmin Mendiolo, Vanden High School, Travis USD  
2nd place – Juan Mendez, Vanden High School, Travis USD  
3rd place – Esther Khait, Vanden High School, Travis USD

Physical Science

1st place – Allison McCabe, Benicia High School, Benicia USD  
2nd place – Evan Torres, Benicia High School, Benicia USD  
3rd place – Gurmehar Atwal, Vanden High School, Travis USD

**Over-all Winner:** Allison McCabe, Benicia High School, Benicia USD

Certificates, medals, and prizes were awarded to the winners. The [2021 Virtual Science and Engineering Fair Award Ceremony](#) and the program, with links to the fair project submissions, are posted on Solano County Office of Education's website.

Participants' investigative science and engineering projects were reviewed and judged by representatives from various universities. Middle and high school students who were top winners in this competition are eligible to enter the California State Science and Engineering Fair, held at the California Science Center in Los Angeles, April 12-13.

For more information about the Science and Engineering Fair, contact Lilibeth Pinpin, Director of Innovative Programs and Student Success, at [lpinpin@solanocoe.net](mailto:lpinpin@solanocoe.net) or 707-399-4439.

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Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) provides leadership, support, and fiscal oversight for charter schools and Benicia, Dixon, Fairfield-Suisun, Travis, Vacaville, and Vallejo school districts which serve approximately 63,000 students. Solano County Superintendent of Schools, Lisette Estrella-Henderson is elected by voters of Solano County. The Superintendent is a state constitutional officer who serves as the chief executive officer of SCOE and as a liaison between local school districts and the state.