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International Science and Engineering Fair comes to Reno

2009 fair anticipated to generate \$6.6 million in tourism revenue and involve hundreds of local volunteers

RENO, Nev. – Nevada will soon host the world's largest pre-college science competition. The Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) is coming to the Reno-Sparks Convention Center – and also celebrating its 60th year – May 10-16, 2009. The event is anticipated to draw 6,000 visitors from more than 50 countries and generate \$6.6 million in travel and tourism revenue to the state.

"We are thrilled to have this opportunity to introduce visitors and media from around the world to our community and region," said Mayor Bob Cashell, City of Reno. "I'm sure they will come away impressed and will understand why we call the Reno-Tahoe area 'America's Adventure Place.'"

Intel ISEF is a program with true international flavor. Finalists emerge from a worldwide field of several million students who compete in more than 65,000 affiliated fairs around the world. More than 1,600 finalists representing more than 50 countries will attend Intel ISEF and compete for more than \$4 million in prizes. Based on past events, it is estimated that 20 percent of the finalists will already have patents or patents pending on their projects.

"Bringing Intel ISEF to our region presents a wonderful opportunity to shine the spotlight on the role and importance of science and math education," said Stephen Wells, president of the Desert Research Institute, part of the Nevada System of Higher Education.

Wells is also serving as president of Gathering Genius (G²), a Nevada nonprofit organization founded in 2006 to host the fair and increase the interest, competitiveness and participation of Nevada students in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math. Together with the City of Reno, G² will host Intel ISEF. G² is also partnering with agencies and organizations across the state to promote 2009 as the Year of Science and Math Education in Nevada.

To make Intel ISEF a success, about 500 volunteers and 150 language interpreters will be needed. Nearly 1,000 experts from all fields of science and engineering will be selected to judge the exhibits and interact with the students. All Intel ISEF judges must have a doctorate degree or six years of experience in a field equivalent to that being judged.

Sponsorship is also vitally important. Major event sponsors to date include Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Redfield Foundation, Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors' Authority, State of Nevada, International Game Technology, City of Reno, John Ben Snow Foundation and the Nevada Commission on Tourism.

A significant G² goal is to raise enough money to create a post-fair legacy to meet the organization's continued mission. After the 2009 Intel ISEF, G² will use the remaining funds to enhance science education in Nevada and continue aiding and enhancing science fairs throughout Nevada and the nation, encouraging and enriching science education in the state.

"Development of future scientists and engineers is vital to our region and nation's competitiveness, and science fairs are one means by which to inspire student interest at an early age," said Wells.

The ISEF has been coordinated since 1950 by the Society for Science & the Public, one of the most respected non-profit organizations advancing the cause of science. As title sponsor, Intel Corporation makes a significant annual commitment to develop and promote the competition. The Intel Young Scientist Scholarship, the top prize, is awarded to three ISEF finalists who each receive a \$50,000 college scholarship.

Intel ISEF is held in a different city each year and the successful 2008 Intel ISEF was hosted in Atlanta, Ga.

For more information about G² or to volunteer or donate, visit www.ISEFNevada.com.

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The 60th Intel International Science and Engineering Fair will be hosted by the City of Reno and Gathering Genius, Inc. May 10 through 16, 2009, at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center. The world's largest pre-college science competition and world's only science, math, and engineering project competition for students working at a high level, Intel ISEF is a program of the Society for Science and the Public. Learn more at www.isefnevada.com.