

## 2019 CONGRESSIONAL LUNCHEON

The Center for Excellence in Education (CEE) held its Annual Congressional Luncheon in September, sponsored by Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc., in Washington, D.C. Attendees included leaders from business, education, government, and program alumni. Members of Congress were united in highlighting the importance of making STEM education a priority.

The **Senator Joseph I. Lieberman** Award for Outstanding Achievement in Technology and Business was awarded to **Ben Silbermann**, Co-Founder and CEO of Pinterest and a 1998 alumnus of CEE's RSI six-week program at MIT. Pinterest is a virtual pin board and one of the most popular social media sites in the world. The award acknowledges Silbermann's significant business & technology accomplishments.



Senator Lieberman praised Mr. Silbermann for using the technology responsibly. "People get addicted to social media, and there are also harmful things that are on it... Ben has brought value to bear." He noted that as a public service, Pinterest recently announced that vaccine-related content will only return results from respected public health organizations. Additionally, educators across the world are using Pinterest in lesson planning.

In his acceptance remarks Silbermann said: "I've been to a number of CEE

events and I've heard stories about how impactful CEE has been to many people in science and business, and our responsibility today is to make sure that future generations of students have the same chance." The Lieberman Award included a \$10,000 stipend from CEE, which Silbermann generously donated back to CEE, stating "I believe that by empowering young people with opportunity and knowledge, the returns are limitless."



**U.S. Senator Jacky Rosen (NV)**, Honorary CEE Trustee, and a former software developer, said "The STEM gender disparity is holding us back. It's preventing talented minds from inventing the next breakthrough technology, founding the next big startup and keeping our nation safe from cyber-attacks...That's why I'm so passionate about giving women, particularly young girls, more opportunities to get involved in STEM, in careers like coding and engineering." She continued, "The most important investment that we can make in our country and in the future is investment in our education and in those young minds that will make up the workforce of the future."



**Congressman Neal Dunn (FL)**, an Honorary CEE Trustee, said, "Quality education in science, technology,

engineering and math is vital to the future...not only for our scholars... but also to the future of our society. America is the preeminent innovation culture in the world precisely because we've married freedom with the possibility of taking the great liberal arts/STEM education," he said.

**CEE's President Joann DiGennaro** thanked Regeneron for its support and underscored the importance of CEE's programs - the Research Science Institute (RSI), the USA Biolympiad (USABO), and the Teacher Enrichment Program (TEP). All of our programs are cost free to all students and teachers selected to attend. "This nation remains the beacon of hope for economic advancement."



**U.S. Senator Tim Kaine (VA)** addressed the attendees, "Ben, it was wonderful to hear you talk about the impact that RSI made on your life. Two of the RSI high school students this past summer are from Virginia - **Anusha Puri** and **Benjamin Kang**. ...I'm really happy to be here with Joe. Joe is a lifetime friend and someone who has been very passionate about educational excellence."

Registrations for RSI and USABO are available online at [www.cee.org](http://www.cee.org). RSI registration is open until January 15, and USABO is open until January 21, 2020 for students.

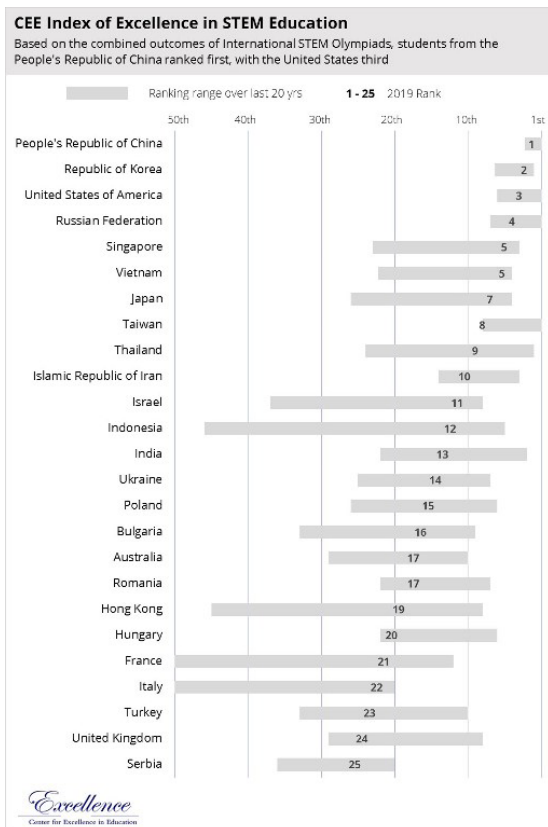
## INDEX OF EXCELLENCE IN STEM EDUCATION

Economic competitiveness is driven by scientific innovation of the nation's top achievers. To understand how well U.S. students stack up against those in other countries, CEE developed an Index of STEM Education Preparedness. It measures educational preparation for the highest levels of international academic competition. It analyzes individual student rankings at each of five STEM-related Olympiad competitions; generates averages and rankings by participating country; and compares overall Olympiad performance by country. The index was prepared by **Mr. Roger Pellegrini**, CEE Trustee.

"The index gives our policy-makers and educators an important tool to see how well our next generation of innovators compares to those in the rest of the world," says Center president, **Joann P. DiGennaro**. "This tool is critical to any analysis of how we prepare the next generation of leaders."

Based on the combined outcomes of International Olympiads in Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Math, and Informatics, the index shows:

- The People's Republic of China has dominated each of these events for the last 30 years;
- USA Biolympiad Team is predominant, as evidenced by overall second and third place rankings in the last two years;
- South Korea takes second place;
- The Russian Federation is in fourth place; and
- Places 5 through 10 were captured by Singapore, Vietnam, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand and Iran.



The index also shows that the performance of European students has declined as Asian countries have risen to dominate the Olympiads over the last few decades. Germany, for example, has now dropped out of the top 30, after having ranked number one in 1982, 1988 and 1989. Hungary, with a population only 1/8th the size of Germany's, still managed a 20th place finish; while respectable, that's a drop from the 1st or 2nd place glory it enjoyed in the 1960s and early 70s. Remarkably, Singapore, an even smaller country with a population of fewer than 6 million (half the population of Hungary), was able to tie Vietnam for 5th place.

An analysis of USA Biolympiad Team's performance from 1993 to the present shows a steady improvement in average ranking. The trend line shows movement from approximately a 6th place ranking up to 2nd or 3rd place behind China. The recent focus on STEM education in the United States is partly responsible. In addition, increased competition in the global marketplace has encouraged students to distinguish themselves through excellence in academic competitions.

"In most other countries, the government funds Olympiad programs, including training and other resources for teachers and students," DiGennaro says, "but that is not the case in the U.S. China is pouring resources into these competitions, and that can be a significant advantage for China beyond the Olympiads. It's important to note that China is also investing heavily in innovation, like R&D, an effort that has declined in Europe."

### Methodology

Analysis was performed on data from each of the following well-established International Olympiads, judged to be those most representative of STEM subjects:

IBO – International Biology Olympiad (data from 1990-present)

ICHO – International Chemistry Olympiad (data from 1968-present)

IMO – International Mathematics Olympiad (data from 1959-present)

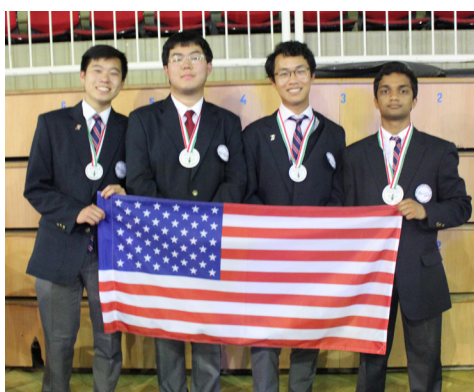
IOI – International Olympiad in Informatics (data from 1989-present)

IPHO – International Physics Olympiad (data from 1967-present)

The results for each individual student competing for each country for each Olympiad were tabulated. CEE averaged the student ranks by country in each Olympiad to create country scores. This enabled the CEE Index to rank the performance of national teams. The average ranking achieved by countries across Olympiads was generated by year, and then those results were ranked to create the final index.



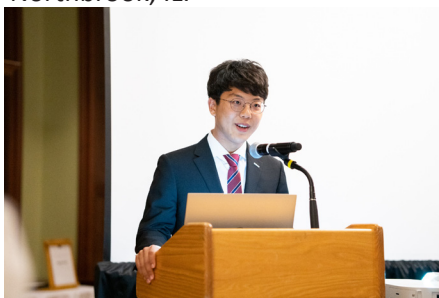
**Kevin Andersen** is the new manager of the USA Biolympiad (USABO). Kevin comes to CEE with over 25 years of experience as a public, private and international school administrator.



All members of USA Biolympiad Team were awarded medals – two Gold and two Silver – at the 30th Annual International Biology Olympiad (IBO) held in Szeged, Hungary in July. Four students represented the United States at IBO after winning the USA Biolympiad (USABO) National Finals, sponsored by CEE with UC San Diego. IBO 2019 Medalists from USA Biolympiad Team are: **Gold medals:** **Christopher Wang**, Acton-Boxborough Regional High School, Acton, MA; **Suhas Chundi**, Carmel High School, Carmel, IN. **Silver Medals:** **Jason Zhang**, Troy High School, Troy, MI; **Henry Shen**, Oak Ridge High School, Oak Ridge, TN. **Christopher Wang** came in third overall, and all US team members placed in the top 14% in a field of 285 competitors.

CEE, in partnership with MIT, held the 36th Research Science Institute under the direction of **Amy Sillman**, Ph.D. and an RSI '84 alumnus. In addition to 52 U.S. high school rising seniors, 30 international students participated this summer from Bulgaria, Canada, China, India, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Turkey. The top 5 award winners for oral and top 5 written presentations were chosen from 82 participants by an eminent panel of judges. \$1,000 scholarship awards were presented by **Dr. Ross Grossman**, retired SVP, Human Resources, Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc., on behalf of Regeneron. Dr. Grossman is a CEE Trustee.

The top 5 written presentations awardees were: **Ahmad Abdel-Azim**, Appleton, WI; **Jason Liu**, Reno, NV; **Nadine Meister**, Ellicott City, MD; **Sahil Pontula**, Apex, NC; and **Zhifei Yu**, Shenzhen, China. The top 5 oral presentations awardees were: **Dawson Byrd**, Norwalk, CT; **Dimitar Chakarov**, Plovdiv, Bulgaria; **Azra Haseki**, Istanbul, Turkey; **Rupert Li**, Portland, OR; and **Sarosh Nagar**, Northbrook, IL.



**Jaehyun Lee**, a senior at Seoul Science High School in Seoul, Republic of Korea, was chosen by his RSI peers for the top honor—Rickoid of the Year. The award recognizes academic acumen, leadership and personal demeanor, and is named for the late Admiral H.G. Rickover, father of the nuclear Navy and a founder of CEE.



**Mariah Green** is new Director of CEE's Teacher Enrichment Program (TEP). Before joining CEE, Mariah taught high school math in Houston, TX and served as an instructional coach at Harvard's Center for Education Policy Research. She has a B.S. in Management Information Systems from the University of Texas and a M. Ed. in Education Policy & Management from Harvard University.

TEP Teacher Roundtables are forums to connect industry and academic representatives with teachers to create awareness of (STEM) career fields, the job skills required, and opportunities for their students to explore STEM subjects and career paths. TEP programming has been available to teachers in California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and West Virginia. CEE collaborates with community colleges, universities, corporations, state agencies, and STEM education representatives committed to improving STEM teaching and learning. All TEP resources and professional development events are available cost-free to participants. More than 3,000 teachers from 1,389 schools have participated in TEP's programming, positively impacting the STEM education of more than 543,000 students.



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In 1983, **Admiral H.G. Rickover** received the first gift to CEE of \$250 for a university lecture. Over the past 36 years, more than 4,300 donors—including alumni, friends, parents, corporations, foundations and organizations—have supported the Center’s mission to nurture high school and university scholars to careers of excellence and leadership in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and to encourage international collaboration between and among leaders in the global community. Today, CEE’s 2,800 alumni represent all 50 U.S. states and 56 countries. **Joann DiGennaro**, the Center’s cofounder, continues to carry the organization to new heights in national and international recognition.

CEE’s world-renowned STEM programs are unique because they are offered cost-free to participants, thereby eliminating economic barriers to participation by teachers and students. Cost-free programming is only possible because of the thousands of donors that have invested in the Center’s students and teachers. As a nationally-respected nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, CEE has

earned the top four-star rating by Charity Navigator, and GuideStar’s highest level of recognition—Platinum—for transparency.

Every gift to CEE has a measurable impact, and enables deserving scholars and teachers to further their STEM education through unique and impactful experiences.

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### DAVIDSON FELLOWS

The Davidson Fellows Scholarships were awarded to CEE RSI alumni (right) at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. CEE applauds: **Siona Prasad**, RSI '18, Vienna, Virginia; **Cynthia Chen**, RSI '19, Cupertino, California; **Rachel SeEVERS**, RSI '18, Lexington, Kentucky; and **Hiba Hussain**, RSI '19, Old Greenwich, Connecticut. Honorable Mentions: **Benjamin Liu**, RSI '18, Arcadia, California, and **Koushik Sridhar**, RSI '19, Charlotte, North Carolina. The Davidson Fellows Scholarship awards scholarships annually to recognize outstanding academic students 18 years of age and under who have completed significant research in STEM and other areas.



CEE’s Executive Vice President Maite P. Ballestero pictured with RSI alumni at the Davidson Fellows Scholarship awards ceremony in Washington, DC.

## WHERE ARE CEE ALUMNI NOW?

**Pejr Anderson** (RSI '91) is Co-Owner of Dynamic Glass Products, LLC, Chairman of Silicon Pastures, and Co-founder of NBX. He holds a Master's of Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from MIT.

**Andrew Chatham** (RSI '97) is Distinguished Software Engineer at Waymo and Principal Engineer at Google in Mountain View, CA. He holds a B.S. in Computer Science and Economics from Duke.

**Brad Hargreaves** (USABO '03, '04) is Founder & CEO at Common. He's been named to *Vanity Fair's* "The Next Establishment," *Inc.* magazine's "30 Under 30," and *Business Insider's* "Silicon Alley 100." He holds a B.S. in Molecular Biology and Economics from Yale.

**Kelley Harris** (USABO '03, '04; RSI '04) Ph.D., is Assistant Professor of Genome Sciences at the University of Washington and a Sloan Fellow. She holds a Ph.D. in Applied Mathematics with a Designated Emphasis in Computational Biology from University of California, Berkeley and a M.Phil. in Biological Science from Cambridge University. She also holds an A.B. in Mathematics from Harvard.

**Josie Weeks Haspel** (RSI '01) is SVP, Corporate Strategy at Wells Fargo. She holds an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and an A.B. in Physics from Harvard.

**Irene Kim** (RSI '99) Ph.D., is Associate Director, Business Development and Strategy at Neon Therapeutics. She holds a Ph.D. in Virology and an A.B. in Biochemical Sciences from Harvard.

**Sam Powell** (RSI '04) is Principal at Gamut Capital in New York City. He holds a B.S.E. in Operations Research and Financial Engineering from Princeton.

**Eric Rains** (RSI '86) Ph.D., is a Professor of Mathematics at Caltech and currently Chair of the Department. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Mathematics from Harvard University and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Mathematics from Cambridge. His bachelor's degrees in computer science and physics, and M.S. in Mathematics are from Case Western Reserve University.

**Kejia Sun** (RSI '00) is Portfolio Manager at Citadel Global Equities. She holds an MBA from Harvard Business School and a B.S. in Electrical Engineering, Biological Sciences from Stanford.

**Brien Wheeler** (RSI '85) is Sr. Manager, Software Development at Amazon. He holds an M.S. in Computer Science and a B.S. in Computer Engineering from Case Western Reserve.

**Emma Zbarsky** (RSI '99) Ph.D., is Associate Professor at Wentworth Institute of Technology. She holds a Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Chicago, an M.S. in Applied Mathematics from the University of Washington, and an S.B. in Mathematics from MIT.

## ALUMNI EVENTS



Alumni and friends of CEE's STEM programs gathered in October to 'Celebrate CEE' in Boston. Hosted by Accenture's Boston Innovation Hub, guests enjoyed camaraderie, food, and networking with alumni of the Research Science Institute (RSI) and the USA Biolympiad (USABO).

**Dan Elron**, Accenture's Managing Director of Corporate Strategy, Innovation and Technology, delivered thought-provoking comments, "Why Can't We Innovate? The challenges and opportunities of large organizations." **Brien Wheeler** (RSI '85), Chair of the alumni campaign, spoke about the importance of alumni support. Accenture's sponsorship for the event was made possible by **Mark Knickrehm**, Group Chief Executive – Accenture Strategy, husband of **Diana (Detwiler) Knickrehm** (RSI '84).



In October alumni and friends met in Palo Alto, CA for a festive evening of networking sponsored by **Arvind Parthasarathi** (RSI '90), CEE Trustee. Alums spanned RSI and USABO from years 1986 to 2019. **Rich Simon** (RSI '86) and **Dana Caulder** (RSI '89) spoke about the 2019 and 2020 Alumni Annual Fund.

## ALUMNI ADVISORY COMMITTEE

CEE's Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) fosters an engaged, supportive community of parents and alumni to forge meaningful connections with new Research Science Institute (RSI) and USA Biolympiad (USABO) parents. **Dr. Douglas Himberger**, CEE Trustee, serves as chair of the Committee. RAC members welcome 2019 RSI and USABO parents into the CEE family and plan new ways to involve parents from previous years.

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Center for Excellence in Education  
8201 Greensboro Drive, Suite 215  
McLean, VA 22102  
703-448-9062 • [www.CEE.org](http://www.CEE.org)

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