Bank of America Renews Successful Science Mentoring Program

Support from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation will help CERT expand its outreach program — which gives California Science Fair participants the opportunity to work in CE-CERT labs and be mentored by Center scientists and engineers.

In 2010, the Bank of America-funded program benefited high school science teachers and students of Riverside Unified School District. Three weekly workshops offered students a range of science fair ideas involving technologies to promote more sustainable lifestyles. The 17 participating students were awarded a total of 25 awards, including 16 gold medals and five Special Sponsored Awards in District and Regional science competitions.

"As an environmental research and education institution, one of our responsibilities is to promote environmental awareness and a real-world commitment to sustainability," said CERT Director Matt Barth. "We also hope this program plays a part in producing the next generation of environmental researchers."

Participation allowed children of wide socio-economic backgrounds and their teachers the opportunity to see first-hand the cutting-edge research at CE-CERT.

A similar program is being developed for the Fall, 2011.

The latest Riverside student to qualify for the California State Science Fair with the assistance of the BOA-funded mentoring program was King High’s Tulsi Shah (right). She prepared for the competition using instruments in the CE-CERT laboratory of Akua Asa-Awuku, (left) an Assistant Professor of Chemical and Environmental Engineering.