Students descend on LANL April 23-24 for Supercomputing Challenge

April 17, 2012

LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, April 17, 2012—More than 200 New Mexico students and their teachers will convene at LANL April 23-24 for judging and the awards ceremony in the 22nd annual New Mexico Supercomputing Challenge.

More than 60 teams of students from elementary, middle, and high school are participating in the event, said David Kratzer of the Lab's High Performance Computer Systems group and LANL's coordinator of the Supercomputing Challenge.

While at LANL, students will present their projects and take part in tours, talks, and demonstrations with Lab scientists and researchers. Student projects will be recognized during an awards ceremony from 9 to 11:30 a.m., April 24 at the Church of Christ, 2323 Diamond Drive in Los Alamos.

"The mission of the Supercomputing Challenge is to teach students how to use powerful computers to analyze, model, and solve real-world problems," Kratzer said. The

goal of the yearlong competition is to increase knowledge of science and computing, expose students and teachers to computers and applied mathematics, and instill enthusiasm for science in elementary, middle- and high-school students, their families, and communities.

The Challenge is project-based learning, geared to teaching participants a wide range of skills: research, writing, teamwork, time management, oral presentations, and computer programming. Any New Mexico elementary, middle-school or high-school student is eligible to enter the Supercomputing Challenge.

Lab personnel can visit the Santa Clara Gallery on the second floor of the J. Robert Oppenheimer Study Center on Monday afternoon (April 23) to view posters that describe students' computational science projects. Check the Supercomputing Challenge webpage to find out when teams will be presenting.

Kratzer noted the support of nearly 100 Los Alamos employees who volunteer to work on the Supercomputing Challenge. "Without the support of these volunteers we couldn't provide the first-class event we do for the students who have worked so hard to get to this point. I am grateful for their assistance," he said.

More information about the New Mexico Supercomputing Challenge, including lists of student projects and sponsors, is on the Supercomputing Challenge web page.