



# Moody's Mega Math Challenge 2006

A contest for high school students in the NYC metropolitan area

SIAM  
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics  
3600 University City Science Center  
Philadelphia, PA 19104 USA



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CONTACT:

Michelle Montgomery, Marketing Manager  
Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics  
3600 University City Science Center  
Philadelphia, PA 19104-2688  
Phone: 215-382-9800 x368; Fax: 215-386-7999  
E-mail: [Montgomery@siam.org](mailto:Montgomery@siam.org); [M3challenge@siam.org](mailto:M3challenge@siam.org)

## Staples High School of Westport, Connecticut, takes top prize in Moody's Mega Math Challenge

**April 6, 2006** — On Wednesday, April 5, the Moody's Foundation awarded scholarships totaling \$60,000 to the top six teams of high school students competing in the first-ever Moody's Mega Math Challenge, an applied mathematics competition that requires students to complete an open-ended, realistic, challenging, modeling problem focused on real-world issues. At an awards ceremony following the final validation judging, a team of students from Staples High School of Westport, Connecticut, was presented with the Summa Cum Laude prize of \$20,000, to be divided equally among its four members. "The most exciting part was the intensity," beamed Frank Corbo, Staples Math Department Chair, "you would have thought it was the Super Bowl." This year's problem, Solving the Social Security Stalemate, can be viewed at [http://m3challenge.siam.org/M3\\_Challenge\\_PROBLEM\\_06.pdf](http://m3challenge.siam.org/M3_Challenge_PROBLEM_06.pdf).

Five other teams were awarded scholarships ranging from \$2,500 to \$15,000, and five honorable mention prizes of \$1,000 per team were announced. Members of the top six teams were required to present their winning solutions to a panel of professional applied mathematicians at the Moody's corporate headquarters on Wednesday. The panel then decided the final ranking of the papers. Only high school juniors and seniors in the New York metropolitan area were eligible to participate in the competition. "Our goal, and the goal of the competition, is to motivate high school students to think about solving real-world problems using applied mathematics," said Frances G. Laserson, President, The Moody's Foundation. "We want to increase students' interest in pursuing math-related studies and careers in college and beyond."

Of the 129 teams (572 students) that submitted viable solutions, the top six that were awarded scholarship prizes are:

**Summa Cum Laude Team Prize — \$20,000**

Staples High School—Team #57, Westport, Connecticut

Coach: William Walsh

Students: Miles Lubin, Elizabeth Marshman, Vikas Murali, and Andrew Tschirhart

**Magna Cum Laude Team Prize—\$15,000**

Immaculata High School—Team #20, Somerville, New Jersey

Coach: Elaine Petsu

Students: Christopher Fajardo, Mary Germino, Robert Lee-Own, William Pugh Matthew, and Tom-Wolverton

**Cum Laude Team Prize—\$10,000**

Herricks High School—Team #14, New Hyde Park, New York

Coach: Howard Huang

Students: Amulya Bhagat, Amol Jain Yaagnik Kosuri, Sam Yoon

**Meritorious Team Prize—\$7,500**

Great Neck North High School –Team #143, Great Neck, New York

Coach: Madeleine Schindel

Students: Benjamin Albert, Benjamin Leibowicz, Moon Limb, Joanna Melnick, Debbie Yee

**Exemplary Team Prize—\$5,000**

Manalapan High School—Team #113, Manalapan, New Jersey

Coach: Stephanie Lynn Pepper

Students: Naiim S. Ali, Andrew Freddo, Franklin Tong, Caleb Tseng Nicholas Adam Wong

**First Honorable Mention—\$2,500**

High Technology High School – Team #64, Lincroft, New Jersey

Coach: Ellen D. LeBlanc

Students: Kathryn Silverio, Elizabeth Wendel, Yelizaveta Yermakova

Students from the following five high schools received Honorable Mention awards of \$1,000 per team. They are: Manalapan High School, Manalapan, NJ; McNair Academic High School, Jersey City, NJ; New Providence High School, New Providence, NJ; Northport High School, Northport, NY; and Tappan Zee High School, Orangeburg, NY.

Funded by the Moody's Foundation and organized by the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM), the competition spotlights applied mathematics as a powerful problem-solving tool, as a viable and exciting profession, and as a vital contributor to advances in an increasingly technical society. Both Moody's and SIAM have identified the pipeline of students choosing to study applied mathematics as an important investment of their resources.

The Moody's Foundation is a charitable foundation established by Moody's Corporation. Moody's Corporation

(NYSE: MCO) is the parent company of Moody's Investor Service, a leading provider of credit ratings, research, and analysis covering debt instruments and securities in the global capital markets, and Moody's KMV, the leading provider of market-based quantitative services for banks and investors in credit-sensitive assets serving the world's largest financial institutions. The corporation employs approximately 2,500 people worldwide and maintains offices in 19 countries. Further information is available at [www.moodys.com](http://www.moodys.com).

SIAM, headquartered in Philadelphia, PA, is an international community of over 10,000 individual members, including applied and computational mathematicians, computer scientists, and other scientists and engineers. The Society advances these fields through a series of premier journals and a wide selection of conferences. With over 500 academic and corporate institutional members, SIAM serves the disciplines of applied mathematics and computational science by publishing a variety of books and prestigious peer-reviewed research journals, by conducting conferences, and by hosting activity groups in various areas of mathematics. SIAM supports regional sections and student chapters that provide many opportunities for students. One of the primary goals of SIAM is to increase the pipeline of students into applied math studies and careers. More information about SIAM is available at [www.siam.org](http://www.siam.org).

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