

## **SUMMARY FACT SHEET FOR THE 53<sup>rd</sup> SCIENCE ENGINEERING FAIR OF HOUSTON**

**PURPOSE:** The Science Engineering Fair of Houston (SEFH) provides a unique and beneficial science educational service to public and private junior and senior high school students in grades 7-12. Through the development and presentation of science/engineering projects, students enhance their abilities to: (1) Make observations; (2) Ask questions regarding particular phenomena or situations; (3) Formulate ideas and procedures for the solution of a problem; (4) Use complex and/or analytical reasoning skills to find an answer or a solution to a problem, and (5) Effectively present their works to society. SEFH strongly believes that it is just as important for students to learn how to use mathematics and science as it is to learn the subject material in the classroom. Project based learning has been our top priority since 1960. **At SEFH we stress understanding not memorization.** The educational activities sponsored by SEFH complement the rapidly growing need for students to be able to understand and utilize new technology. **In addition SEFH also sponsors a Science & Engineering Writing Contest and a Technical Poster Design Contest.**

**SPONSORSHIP:** SEFH is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit educational organization, supervised by a board of directors and **sponsored by the University of Houston-Downtown; the Engineering, Science & Technology Council of Houston; the Greater Houston Partnership; Consumer Energy Alliance; and the Houston Museum of Natural Science and is a member of the INTEL International Science Engineering Fair.** Each year foundations, professional societies, businesses, individuals, industrial and technical organizations in the Houston area donate about 85% of the operating funds. More than 1,200 volunteer workers, serving on twelve major committees, are responsible for the many activities associated with the fair. Approximately 1,200 professionals volunteer their services to the fair as judges. SEFH has no employees.

**COVERAGE:** SEFH serves as the regional fair for all public, private, charter and home school junior and senior high school students in Harris County and 23 surrounding counties throughout Southeast Texas. Major regional fair winners are eligible to compete in the annual International Science and Engineering Fair. **Last year marked another successful year with 1,441 student entries from 145 schools.** Approximately 35,000 projects were entered in the preliminary school/district fair competitions. SEFH is the largest fair of its type in Texas, and one of the largest in the world.

**EXHIBITS AND AWARDS:** The 2012 SEFH projects are scheduled for judging and display **March 1-3 at the George R. Brown Convention Center – Hall D.** Individual projects will be entered in either the Junior/Middle School (grades 7&8) Division, Ninth Grade Division, or Senior Division (grades 10-12). **Individual project categories** include: animal science/zoology, behavioral/social science, biochemistry/microbiology, chemistry, computer science, earth/space science, energy & transportation, engineering, environmental science, mathematics, medicine/health, physics & astronomy, and plant science/botany. **Team project categories** for the Junior/Middle School Division include: botany/environmental science/ zoology; behavioral science/biochemistry/medicine & health; engineering/computers/mathematics, and physical sciences. For the Ninth Grade and Senior Divisions, team project categories are Engineering/Physical Sciences and Life Sciences. **In 2011** SEFH awarded **150 “Place Awards”** and **52** businesses, industries, technical societies, government agencies, and educational institutions presented more than **300 “Special Awards,” fellowships, and scholarships.** SEFH also provided three **Teacher of the Year Awards.** Junior Division winners were eligible to enter the national Discovery Young Scientist Challenge competition. Place award winners were eligible to enter the State SEF in San Antonio. Eleven Senior Division Grand Award winners represented SEFH at the annual INTEL International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in Los Angeles, California.

**PROMOTING THE LEARNING AND APPLICATIONS OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY  
SINCE 1960**

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