



Description of the SSP Science Olympiad Program

The Spectroscopy Society of Pittsburgh (SSP), in conjunction with Central Elementary School in the Hampton Township School District, is sponsoring an Elementary Science Olympiad Program (ESOP). The main purpose of the ESOP is to excite, inspire, challenge, and foster the fun side of science for elementary students of all abilities. The SSP-ESOP provides information, manuals, training, and grant money for teachers and administrators to promote Science Olympiad programs in their schools or districts.

A Science Olympiad consists of different events where students take an active role in exploring science topics related to the school's science curriculum. The events can be scheduled to occur as half-day up to three-day competitions. The length of the Science Olympiad should be based on the needs and curriculum of the school. One of the goals of ESOP is the application of science and other skills to correlated events that are enjoyable and provide a variety of real-world experiences. The program helps students of all abilities succeed in science. It is designed for students in grades 4 through 6; however, it can be adapted to include lower grade levels.

The SSP-ESOP begins in Mid-November with an informational workshop which provides an overview of an actual Elementary Science Olympiad. During the presentation, various materials and manuals are distributed to the attendees. Fundamental information is shared regarding the start and implementation of a Science Olympiad along with the application process for obtaining grant funds through the SSP.

Those unable to attend the workshop can download the grant application from the SSP website (ssp-pgh.org). Grant applications are due January 30, 2009. Grant money will be awarded by March 30, 2009. The grant application form is attached below.

Teachers and/or administrators who plan on developing a Science Olympiad at their schools are also invited to attend a Science Olympiad at Central Elementary School on May 13 - 15, 2009. This event allows interested parties to see, first-hand, actual events of a Science Olympiad and get ideas to help them implement an Olympiad of their own.

When planning the development of an Elementary Science Olympiad Program, the following details should be noted. The mission of the SSP is to award grants for a program in which all students, across grade levels, participate. The ESO Program is not meant to provide a competitive event for an elite few top science students, but to help promote science education for all students.

If you are interested in attending the informational workshop, please contact Marc Hubert to register (hubert@comcast.net) by October 31, 2009. If you are interested in attending the Central Elementary Science Olympiad, please contact Don Antczak (antczak@htsd.k12.pa.us).

The SSP-ESOP, now in its third year, is striving to continue its expansion throughout the Southwestern Pennsylvania Region. It is the hope of the Society members that the Science Olympiad Program is one that will be developed in your school building/district. If you have any questions concerning the SSP-ESOP, please feel free to contact Sarah Shockey at SSP (shockey@pittcon.org) or Penny Gardner at SSP (gardnerp@pittcon.org).