

S Y N O P S I S

SYNOPSYS[®]

Paul Lippe
Sr. Vice President
Business & Market Development

Synopsys, Inc.
700 East Middlefield Road
Mountain View, CA 94043-4033
Telephone: (650) 584-4068
Fax: (650) 584-4087
Email: plippe@synopsys.com
<http://www.synopsys.com>

SYNOPSYS[®]

ポール・リップ
上級席副社長
ビジネス&マーケット・ディベロプメント

シノプシス社
〒94043-4033 米国 カリフォルニア州
マウンテンビュー市
イーストミドルフィールドロード700番地
電話: (650) 584-4068
ファックス: (650) 584-4087
電子メール: plippe@synopsys.com
<http://www.synopsys.com>

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Synopsys Silicon Valley Science & Technology Championship



San Jose Mercury News

WHIZZES OF TOMORROW STUDENTS MIX FUN, LEARNING AT SANTA CLARA VALLEY SCIENCE FAIR

DATE: Thursday, April 1, 1999

Section: SECTION: Local

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BY MICHAEL CRONK, Mercury News Staff Writer

Money is filthy, scientifically speaking. There are microbes on that moola.

Twelve-year-old Jennifer Schmahl -- with the help of a San Jose State University professor who taught her how to do the research -- proved it in a monthlong experiment in which she was able to isolate, incubate and identify aerobic bacteria on dollar bills.

"I thought it was fun," said Jennifer, a seventh-grader at Holy Family School in San Jose. "I found it was really easy to learn the techniques."

Having fun and getting excited about math and the sciences is what the annual Santa Clara Valley Science and Engineering Fair has been about for the past 39 years. About 900 sixth- through 12th-graders from 52 schools participated this year at the fair in the San Jose Convention Center's Parkside Hall.

Aart de Geus, chairman and CEO of Synopsys, announced Wednesday that the fair and science instruction in Silicon Valley are moving into the 21st century with creation of the Synopsys Silicon Valley Science and Technology Championship.

He said the company is committing \$3 million over the next three years to pay for training and support of science teachers, materials and equipment, recruitment and training of volunteer science fair coaches, industry internships and other incentives for students.

"The most important people in a child's life, besides parents, are teachers," de Geus said. "This program focuses on supporting our teachers in a variety of ways."

San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzales and Knight Ridder CEO Tony Ridder will serve as co-chairmen. Knight Ridder is the Mercury News' parent company.

"The students competing here today will be tomorrow's scientists and engineers; they will be the next century's teachers and researchers," Ridder said. "They will find cures for diseases, invent new ways to communicate and, with all their abilities, they will surely make the world a better place for all of us."

The budding scientists' findings and projects were judged by Bay Area scientists and engineers. Few areas of inquiry escaped the kids' attention, including the fundamental question: If a potato and an onion are both placed in water, which will sprout first?

"I'm happy to report the potato is emerging as the winner," de Geus joked to the crowd.

The young scientists discovered and demonstrated, among other things, that in baseball, curve balls and sliders actually do curve and slide, and people more readily recall information they get visually than that obtained by hearing.

Necessity being the mother of invention led to the development of Le Doggy, a light-emitting dog collar that is activated by a sensor that detects the absence of light -- that is, darkness. Its developers, David Huynh and Mai Nguyen, 17-year-old juniors at Oak Grove High School, said they came up with the idea while they were jogging one night and saw a dog being walked on a leash almost run down by a car.

And while the benefit of garlic to humans is well-documented, two Bellarmine College Preparatory freshmen, who also hail from South County's "Garlic Country," decided to study its antibiotic effects on other plants.

San Jose Mercury News

Ben Fohner, 15, and Quinn Kennett, 14, said garlic can be used to make a less costly and more effective anti-bacterial agent for plants than those now produced commercially.

"It was interesting how something that's very simple can produce such complex and beneficial effects," Quinn said. "Garlic doesn't have any negative effects, except for the smell."

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San Jose Mercury News

FUTURE S.J. SCIENTISTS NEED FUNDS

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JOE RODRIGUEZ column

NO MONEY for paper towels. That's what I kept thinking about as Heidi Black and I toured the science classrooms at Piedmont Hills High School. Laboratories need paper towels. But there was no money in the budget.

"The students bring paper towels from home," Black said. She pointed to a cabinet. It had several rolls of paper towels hoarded like precious metals.

She is the first and only "science fair coordinator" for the East Side Union High School District. Her job is to get all 10 East Side high schools into Silicon Valley's bigger and better science competition next year. Only one East Side school has participated regularly.

A recently published survey found that the number of American college graduates earning science and technology degrees is dropping. This is not news Silicon Valley wants to hear. It already has trouble filling high-skill jobs, and you can import only so many foreign engineers.

Nobody can explain the declining interest, but we do know where to find a great, untapped pool of potential scientists and technicians -- the East Side high schools. Here are Silicon Valley's emerging and optimistic minorities, the kids from working-class and middle-class families who want them to become professional somebodies. So do principals, the school board and valley CEOs.

"Everybody has high expectations for the students, especially government and industry," Black said. "But nobody's giving them the tools they need."

The best way to learn science is by pursuing individual projects, by experimentation, by trial and error. Regular classrooms aren't set up for projects. Science fairs and competitions are ideal. But that's easier said than done on the East Side.

Black and I walked to Bob Towle's biology class.

"Science fairs? I like science fairs," he said. "But you need time to spend with students on their projects. We don't have that amount of time here."

I believe him. Towle teaches five classes. Each class has 32 students. Let's do the arithmetic. That's 160 papers to grade after every test or quiz.

At least one CEO sees the raw science talent on the East Side and how to begin tapping it. Aart de Geus of Synopsys Inc., in Palo Alto, has committed \$3 million to expand the regional high school science fair and competition. A chunk of that money, maybe even half, will go to the underrepresented East Side schools. In a smaller but important contribution, Nextlink Communications Inc., is paying Black's salary while she takes a year off from teaching to spearhead the East Side science projects.

Hickam speaks

To jump-start the new fair, Synopsys brought scientist and author Homer Hickam to NASA/Ames Research Center on Tuesday. The son of a West Virginia coal miner, Hickam taught himself to build rockets and won the 1960 National Science Fair. The recent movie "October Sky" tells his story. After a career as a NASA rocket scientist, he writes books.

"When I heard about this science fair, I said, 'Yes, I'll come and speak,'" Hickam said. "I know how important the science fair was to me."

San Jose Mercury News

Black brought some East Side students to meet Hickam. You could say they're the 1990s urban version of him.

The 56-year-old Hickam said his mining town knew it was dying and wisely gave him and his classmates a good basic education. Silicon Valley isn't dying. That's one big difference. But the valley's aid to local education doesn't match the need or its ability to give, especially at East Side schools.

Teacher shortage

For example, 250 students at Piedmont Hills High want to study physics next year. There are teachers and rooms for only 180. Science fair projects require research, but none of the East Side school libraries has high-caliber science books or journals.

Synopsys' \$3 million is just a start. For a regional economy built on brainpower, science education here is shamefully underfunded. Anyone have some extra cash for paper towels?

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Synopsys, Inc.

700 East Middlefield Road
Mountain View, CA 94043-4033
Tel: 650-962-5000
Fax: 650-934-1366

SYNOPSYS

June 25, 1999

Gay Joshlyn
National Economic Council
The White House
OEOP Room 235
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear Ms. Joshlyn,

Thank you for your interest in the Synopsys Silicon Valley Science & Technology Championship. As per our phone conversation, I am enclosing an information package including the Synopsys Championship brochure, an announcement press release and articles about recent outreach events.

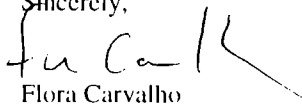
The Synopsys Championship is an educational initiative intended to advance high school science and math education in the Silicon Valley through scientific research and project-based learning. Project-based learning is an exciting and effective form of education that results in high-level critical thinking skills and teamwork; two qualities that are in high demand in today's workforce.

To achieve this goal, the involvement of other organizations and companies is absolutely critical. Industry and community leaders throughout the Valley are invited to participate by providing in-kind donations and volunteers that will help inspire and encourage students in their scientific pursuits.

Again, we would like to thank you for your interest in the Synopsys Championship. If you have any questions or wish to receive more information, please contact me at:

Flora Carvalho
Phone: (650) 584-5254
Email: flora@synopsys.com

Sincerely,



Flora Carvalho
Community Relations Program



Flora Carvalho
Community Relations Program

Synopsys, Inc.
700 East Middlefield Road
Mountain View, CA 94043
Telephone: (650) 584-5254
Fax: (650) 584-4087
Email: flora@synopsys.com
<http://www.synopsys.com>

Synopsys Silicon Valley Science & Technology Championship

Synopsys Silicon Valley Science & Technology Championship

The Synopsys Silicon Valley Science & Technology Championship enhances education for economically disadvantaged high school students by stimulating learning in math and science through participation in the regional science fair (formerly the Santa Clara Valley Science & Engineering Fair) and promoting numerous community outreach programs.

Project-based learning is an exciting - and therefore a more effective - form of education that results in high-level critical thinking skills and teamwork; two qualities that are in high demand in today's workforce.

How Students Can Participate: Opportunities to Experiment and Learn

- Secure an adult sponsor: a teacher, parent or coach
- Fill out the necessary Synopsys Championship forms
- Identify a scientific question for examination
- Research a topic, formulate a hypothesis, test it and evaluate the results
- Prepare a technical paper and/or a science fair exhibit

How Teachers Can Participate: Reaching to the Highest Potential

The Synopsys Championship is coordinating and supporting several programs dedicated to enhancing teachers' skills:

- San Jose State University Partners in Science
- Summer Teacher Institute
- Mathematics and Science Teacher Education Program (MASTEP)
- East Side Union High School District Fair Development Program

How Volunteers Become Coaches: Making Dreams Come True

As one of the world's centers for creativity and intellectual prowess, Silicon Valley is burgeoning with successful engineers, scientists and other professionals. Be a catalyst for change. Participate as a coach for a student or teacher at a school in your community to provide expertise and assistance in the development of student projects, training and much more:

- Saturday Academies
- Summer Student Programs
- Teacher Institutes

How Companies Become Sponsors: Giving Back to the Community

The Synopsys Championship provides numerous corporate sponsorship opportunities:

- Summer Teacher Institute: underwrites costs associated with enrichment program for science and math teachers
- Qualifying Fairs: underwrites local qualifying fairs
- Scientific Review Committee: funds expenses to attend Intel International Science & Engineering Fair
- Project Awards: endows First, Second and Third Place Championship Awards
- Awards Ceremony: covers Awards Ceremony expenses
- Volunteer Exchange: funds all volunteer materials
- Coach Clinics: funds preparation clinics for Championship volunteer coaches

For more information, email championship@synopsys.com or call (650) 584-5710

www.sciencefair.org

Synopsys Silicon Valley Science & Technology Championship

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 31, 1999

Contact: Judy Peterson
(408) 287-1700

Synopsys Announces Major Math and Science Program

Multi-Million Dollar Donation Will Increase Science Fair Participation, Help Disadvantaged Youth

San Jose, CA — **Synopsys Chairman and CEO Aart de Geus** today announced the company's creation of the Synopsys Silicon Valley Science and Technology Championship, a highly targeted initiative that will help local students learn math and science better through project-based, inquiry learning. "The most important people in a child's life, besides parents, are teachers," said Dr. de Geus, "and this program focuses on supporting our teachers in a variety of ways."

Synopsys is committing \$3 million over three years to increase science fair participation by underwriting:

- 1) teacher release time and stipends to oversee science fair projects;
- 2) summer teacher enrichment programs such as placement in academic and industry research labs;
- 3) teacher training institutes geared to science fair coaching;
- 4) science project materials and equipment;
- 5) recruitment and training of volunteer science fair coaches;
- 6) industry internships and other incentives for students.

The Synopsys Silicon Valley Science and Technology Championship is the transformation of a regional science fair, known for the past 39 years as the Santa Clara Valley Science and Engineering Fair, into a far-reaching program to benefit teachers, students and schools.

Dr. de Geus also announced that **San Jose Mayor Ron Gonzales** and **Knight Ridder CEO Tony Ridder** are joining him as co-chairs of the Championship Advisory Board.

"This fair has helped thousands of students experience the joy and rewards of learning science and engineering," Dr. de Geus said at a press conference held amid hundreds of science fair projects in San Jose. "It has been lovingly nurtured by dedicated volunteers, many of whom started their careers in technology and science with this fair, and it has been sustained by the extraordinary contributions of great teachers."

—more—

"With more funding for teachers, and with more volunteers from industry to coach students without family resources, there will be more students participating in the fair, and eventually more students pursuing technical careers. This is one way Silicon Valley can begin to address its reliance on H-1B visa hires by investing in the youth directly around us. We challenge others companies to participate in the Championship, with at least another million dollars committed per year and 500 volunteer science project coaches recruited by the start of school in September."

Joe Coto, Superintendent of the East Side Union High School District, said that corporate support such as Synopsys' is essential for districts like his to achieve parity with districts in wealthier neighborhoods. "We have nearly half of the 63,000 high school students in Santa Clara County, and it takes money and volunteer involvement to supplement what our teachers can accomplish," Mr. Coto said. "Synopsys has taken a leading position in supporting our math and science programs, and we hope that other corporations will join them and the Championship."

In his remarks, **Knight Ridder Chairman and CEO Tony Ridder** said that "nothing is more important than teaching our children. If we can ignite their curiosity, they will always be hungry to learn. Appropriately, this fair is not only a competition, but also a symbol and a vehicle for learning. The students competing here today will be tomorrow's scientists and engineers; they will be the next century's teachers and researchers. They will find cures for diseases, invent new ways to communicate and, with all their abilities, they will surely make the world a better place for all of us. The Championship is not the final round; it's just the beginning."

Synopsys Inc. (Nasdaq: SNPS) is a leading supplier of electronic design automation (EDA) solutions to the global electronic market. The company provides comprehensive design technologies to creators of advanced integrated circuits, electronic systems and systems on a chip. Synopsys also provides consulting services and support to its customers to streamline the overall design process and accelerate time-to-market. Additional information about Synopsys is available at <http://www.synopsys.com>.

Dr. Aart J. de Geus is Chairman and CEO of Synopsys, Inc. Since co-founding Synopsys in 1986, Dr. de Geus has grown the company from a start-up focused on breakthrough logic synthesis technology to an international EDA market leader with nearly 3,000 employees worldwide. Today, Synopsys is focused on delivering a complete line of best-in-class EDA software, technologies, intellectual property reuse and consulting services necessary to succeed in the era of deep submicron and system-on-a-chip design.

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SYNOPSYS®

CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

SYNOPSYS, INC.
700 EAST MIDDLEFIELD ROAD
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA 94043
TEL: 650.962.5000
FAX: 650.965.8637

LOGIC MODELING
19500 NW GIBBS DRIVE
BEAVERTON, OR 97006
TEL: 503.690.6900
FAX: 503.690.6906

ASIA/PACIFIC HEADQUARTERS

SYNOPSYS, INC.
#31-02 THE CONCOURSE
300 BEACH ROAD
SINGAPORE 199555
TEL: 65.296.7433
FAX: 65.297.1272

EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS

SYNOPSYS EUROPE
STEFAN-GEORGE-RING 6, 5TH FLOOR
D-81929 MUNICH, GERMANY
TEL: 49.89.99.320.130
FAX: 49.89.99.320.132

JAPAN HEADQUARTERS

NIHON SYNOPSYS
SHINJUKU MITSUI BUILDING 19/20F
2-1-1 NISHI-SHINJUKU, SHINJUKU-KU
TOKYO, 163-0420, JAPAN
TEL: 81.3.3346.7030
FAX: 81.3.3346.7050