

## What's happening

### Friday

■ Youths ages 1-17 are invited to **Friday Night Live!**, an hour of tumbling and gymnastics at the Civic Center Gym, 23 Russell Blvd, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Whether they want to work on gymnastics skills or just jump on the trampoline, children will be supervised and coached by gymnastics and dance staff, though children ages 1-4 must have a parent or guardian supervising them on the gym floor. The cost is \$5 at the door.

■ **The Davis high school robotics team**, Citrus Circuits, will hold an informational night about the **FIRST Lego League**, a program for students in grades 4-8, from 6 to 7 p.m. in the Holmes Junior High School multipurpose room, 1220 Drexel Drive. The event will provide families with information about next year's FIRST Lego League season, during which participants will design and build robots to perform a challenge and compete at tournaments. For more information, visit [www.firstlegoleague.org](http://www.firstlegoleague.org) or email [colindunger@yahoo.com](mailto:colindunger@yahoo.com).

### Through Sunday

■ Birch Lane Elementary School is providing an opportunity to de-clutter homes while making a difference locally by hosting a **mobile clothing drive**. The drive continues through Sunday at the school, 1600 Birch Lane in Davis. A ReUseIt drop box will be on the school campus and items may be placed in it anytime. Tax receipts will be available in the school office from Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Greater Sacramento Area. Donated items that are accepted include usable clothing (all sizes), shoes, jewelry, belts, purses, bedding and linens, backpacks, toys, DVDs and other small non-breakable items. All items must fit inside the drop box.

### Tuesday

■ Davis High School will honor its soon-to-be-graduates at the annual **Senior Awards Night** at 6 p.m. in the Brunelle Performance Hall at DHS, 315 W. 14th St. Thousands of dollars in scholarships will be awarded along with end-of-the-year honors, including the Gordon H. True Service Cup to the most outstanding senior boy and girl, the Rotary Scholarship Cup to the student with the highest weighted grade-point average, the Blue Devil Service Award, the Athletes of the Year and the Rotary Teacher of the Year.

### Friday, June 5

■ Youths ages 1-17 are invited to **Friday Night Live!**, an hour of tumbling and gymnastics at the Civic Center Gym, 23 Russell Blvd, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Whether they want to work on gymnastics skills or just jump on the trampoline, children will be supervised and coached by gymnastics and dance staff, though children ages 1-4 must have a parent or guardian supervising them on the gym floor. The cost is \$5 at the door.

### Thursday, June 11

■ **The city of Davis hosts the annual sixth-grade party** from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the Veterans' Memorial Center, 203 E. 14th St. The event features everything from music and dancing to food, laser tag, a bounce house, foosball, video games, lawn games, board games and more.

Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased at the Community Services office, 600 A St., Suite C, or online at <http://community-services.cityofdavis.org/teens/6th-grade-graduation-party>. Online purchase requires an active online account and a 2013-14 city liability waiver on file. The activity number is 750200. For more information, call 530-757-5626 or email Christine Foster at [cfoster@cityofdavis.org](mailto:cfoster@cityofdavis.org).

# DHS biotech students earn kudos

By Kellen Browning

ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

**T**hirteen Davis High School students were honored on Friday at an awards ceremony at UC Davis for their participation in the 2015 Teen Biotech Challenge.

The challenge, a yearly event sponsored by the UCD Biotechnology Program and various biotech companies, invites interested students to choose and research a biotechnology topic and design a related website in one of seven categories, which range from regenerative medicine to personal genomics and human health.

This year, five DHS students' websites won first-place awards in the competition, which, according to Davis High biology and biotechnology teacher Ann Moriarty, includes students from around Northern California.

Moriarty says DHS students enter the competition "every year, and we always have lots of good results."

The good results this time around came from Helene Levy, Preethi Bhat, Jimmy Zhou and twins Annie and Penny Zheng, who all took home first-place honors for their websites.

Noa Mills, Davis Reina-Guerra, Sehyun Hwang and Kathy Hu received second place in their respective categories, while Sarah Zhang took third place and Van Hseih, Alyssa Gimenez and Shreya Sudarshana were honorable mentions.

Zhou, whose website detailed how the genetic research project known as ENCODE impacts human health, was very surprised to learn that he had won his category.

"After hearing that I got first place, it was literally 10 seconds of shock and 10 seconds of pure joy knowing that all my hard work had paid off," he said.

"Winning means a lot to me because I had worked on this project for so long and really wanted something good to come out of it," Zhou continued. "First place was beyond my expectations and it means a lot that I was able to do so well."

At the awards ceremony, Zhou and the

other first-place finishers presented their websites to the assembled crowd.

"I was personally very nervous since I was presenting to around 100 peers, teachers and specialists in the field," Zhou said.

"I also had the opportunity to interact with many specialists in the biotech field and also received some offers to visit labs over the summer. ... One of the representatives actually invited me to go tour his lab to see the actual techniques that I mentioned in my presentation," he added.

Bhat was "elated" when she found out that her website on biosensors won its category. She sees biotechnology as a possible future profession.

"(Biosensors) is a very narrow topic, but biotechnology in general is a topic I'm very interested in," she said.

Bhat and fellow first-place finisher Hu also applied for and received the Research Scholar Award, which includes an eight-week, paid internship at the California Institute for Regenerative Cures, where the 10 students selected will spend their summer conducting stem-cell research.

"This is the golden spot, really," Moriarty said. "Coming in first (in the challenge) is great, but doing the internship is going to be the best thing in your life."

Sisters Annie and Penny Zheng collaborated on a website about stem cells' potential to cure diseases. Like Zhou, Annie Zheng was "pretty shocked" at receiving first place.

"We didn't think too much about winning or not before submitting our website but we definitely gave it our best shot," she said.

Zheng enjoyed the awards ceremony and liked listening to other people's presentations.

"Everyone was very passionate about their topic," she said. "It was an honor to be able to be around and learn from so many talented people."

Added Penny Zheng, "I just thought it was a really cool and motivating experience overall." She hopes to pursue a health-related job.

"I was already leaning toward a career in health care/medicine and I was definitely fascinated and inspired by what I learned about the potential of stem cells," Penny added. "But I do change my mind a lot, (so) we'll see."

Moriarty believes that the challenge is a great way for students to gain both knowledge of biotechnology topics and useful practical skills in the science field.

"I think it builds confidence in website-building, and the ability to research through material, and figure out what to not include and what to include," she said.

"So it really helps them figure out what is valid research out there, and how to present it."

— Kellen Browning is an Enterprise intern and a junior at Davis High School.



Helene Levy, left, gets the prize for Drug Discovery and Biomanufacturing.

COURTESY PHOTO

## What's the deal with waiting lists?

**C**hances are some of you are high school seniors or you know high school seniors who have been placed on a wait list. More colleges are using wait lists these days to manage their enrollment, and thus more applicants are finding themselves wait-listed.

Just a few years ago, only a couple of the University of California campuses used this practice; now all but UC Merced do so. A similar proliferation is occurring at the private colleges. Why is this trend happening and what are the chances of being offered a spot off the wait list?

Well, as you may know, more students are applying to, and going to, college than ever before ... a good thing for our society and for economic growth. However, the increase in demand for college has caused an increase in selectivity of colleges overall. Students therefore have been applying to more colleges to improve their odds of being accepted, leading to a vicious cycle that increases selectivity.

Meanwhile, colleges have implemented wait lists more often in order to minimize the uncertainty that comes with more students applying to more colleges. Since it is harder to predict who will enroll, colleges employ wait lists to protect their yield, or enrollment rate.

A high yield is a boon for a college since it can lead to lower borrowing costs. Add that yield factor into rankings and you can see why colleges focus on managing yields.

Back to wait lists ... colleges often opt for placing students on wait lists and then pulling them off as needed if they have



not met their enrollment goals rather than accepting more students who may not choose to enroll and thus diminishing their yield.

So what happens when you are placed on a wait list? A couple of things to keep in mind:

■ You still need to select and make a deposit at a college by May 1;

■ You may be on more than one wait list; and

■ You can appeal the decision, but odds are low for achieving a successful appeal.

For the UCs, an applicant needs to "opt in" to the wait list by April 15 and write another supplemental essay, and possibly provide additional information as well. Freshman applicants will be notified between May 1 and June 1 and transfer applicants by July 1.

Each college and system may have a different wait-list procedure. For example, at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, freshmen are notified by May 15 and transfer students by July 15. Private colleges generally ask wait-listed students whether they want to remain on the wait list or be removed from consideration and may or may not require or accept additional information.

Now, to the main question: What are the chances of getting in from the wait list? Not good, I am afraid. But it is not entirely impossible either.

The best place I know to research your chances is the College Board website. Select

### Enrollment at popular colleges

<b>Stanford:</b> 78.9 percent
<b>Brown:</b> 59.9 percent
<b>Claremont McKenna:</b> 52.1 percent
<b>UC Berkeley:</b> 37 percent
<b>Oberlin:</b> 34.5 percent
<b>Cal Poly San Luis Obispo:</b> 32 percent
<b>UC Davis:</b> 23 percent
<b>Willamette:</b> 11.6 percent

the college and choose the "Applying" tab on the left; it will show wait-list data for most colleges.

Let's take Northwestern, for example, since I know of several students who have been wait-listed there. Out of 33,673 applicants, 4,415 were admitted and 2,267 were placed on the wait list. Of this number, 1,587 opted in and 55 were admitted off the wait list.

For UCD, 6,352 were wait-listed, 2,177 opted in and 12 were accepted from the list. Stanford accepted seven from the list. San Diego State University accepted 47. As you can see, there is variation across schools, but the common theme is that these are not happy numbers.

So, what if you were not admitted to your first choice but were wait-listed? Well, since the likelihood of a positive outcome is low, maybe it is time to look at other options. Here are some alternatives to consider:

■ Space available at other colleges. Go to the National Association for Colleges Admission Counseling website — <http://www.nacacnet.org> — and look at their "College Openings Update," which shows the colleges that still

have openings for this application cycle. There are some worthwhile options. Dominican College in Marin has openings, as does Eckerd College, which is right on the beach in Florida and has a superlative marine sciences program.

■ Attend community college then try again. Applications are accepted until school begins in the fall, and then try transferring to your first-choice college when you are a junior.

■ Gap year. There are many different types of gap-year programs that provide opportunities ranging from travel to working to volunteering.

■ Don't worry be happy. As the old proverb goes, make lemonade out of lemons and choose to attend the college where you made a deposit. After all, this is the college that wants and appreciates you. Maybe things happen for a reason.

### Until next time

Alas, it is time for me sign off for this application cycle. I will be back again in the fall. To all of you graduating high school seniors, go forth and prosper and, most importantly, enjoy!

To all of you upcoming high school seniors, have a wonderful summer and keep in mind that there always is a right college out there for you.

— Jennifer Borenstein is an independent college adviser in Davis and owner of *The Right College For You*. Her column is published on the fourth Tuesday of the month. She lives in Davis with her family. Reach her at [jenniferborenstein@therightcollegeforyou.org](mailto:jenniferborenstein@therightcollegeforyou.org), or visit [www.therightcollegeforyou.org](http://www.therightcollegeforyou.org)