



Dr. Veronica C. García
Secretary of Education

New Mexico
Public Education Department
300 Don Gaspar
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501-2786
www.ped.state.nm.us

Beverly Friedman
Public Information Officer
505.827.6661 or 505.795.0180
Bev.Friedman@state.nm.us

NEWS RELEASE

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4 Students Win Sunflower Prizes for Scientific Research

(Santa Fe, NM) – New Mexico Education Secretary Veronica C. Garcia announced today that four New Mexico students have won the Sunflower Prize Competition.

The Sunflower Prize is a collaboration between the Math and Science Bureau of the Public Education Department and two non-profit organizations, Earth's Birthday Project and Inquiry Facilitators. The goal is to help develop New Mexico researchers.

"The program was designed to teach the students how to record data for scientific research, and it was a success," said Dr. Garcia. "My congratulations to the winning students for their outstanding entries."

Sixth-graders Chris Duran and Storm Nelson of Atalaya Elementary of Santa Fe, fifth-grader Joel Castillo of Larragoite Elementary of Santa Fe and third-grader Daniel Feaster of Albuquerque, who is homeschooled, will receive a prize of \$100 each. Their teachers also will receive a cash prize and membership into the state's science and math teachers' professional associations.

The students were recognized at the Public Education Commission meeting on Friday, September 12, at the Anderson-Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum in Albuquerque.

The Sunflower Prize was initiated at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in 2007 in an effort to "grow New Mexico researchers".

Students were given sunflower seeds in a Petri dish and told to record their observations of how the seeds sprouted over a two-week period. They decided how best to present their observations using drawings, writing and graphs.

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