

AU issues a 'high stakes' challenge to top high school students

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Alfred University's Institute for Science, Mathematics and Technology Education is issuing a high-stakes challenge to top high school students: Solve our problem in 48 hours, and win \$5,000. A maximum of 20 teams will be invited to campus June 28-30, 2004, and given a problem to solve, using a variety of analytical equipment available at the University, explained Dr. David G. Toot, director of the AU Institute for Science, Mathematics and Technology Education, as well as associate professor of physics and director of the Stull Observatory. Teams must be comprised of five students and advisor. Student members of the winning team will each receive a \$500 check, and the school that sponsors them will receive a \$2,500 check. Registrations are now being accepted through the competition website: <http://engineering.alfred...> teams have registered, they will be given passwords that will allow them to access a special clues section on the competition website. "Some of the clues posted them by our masterminds (the faculty committee), will be valuable, and others will not, but teams won't know which is which until they actually arrive on campus for the competition," said Toot. Some of the clues may include descriptions of some of the analytical equipment that will be available to students, from equipment for ion chromatography to a scanning electron microscope, and mass and infrared spectrometers, and what kinds of information it can provide to the competitors. The masterminds, in addition to Toot, include: Dr. Alexis Clare, professor of glass science; Dr. Matthew Hall, assistant professor of glass science; and Dr. Jianxin Tang, professor of electrical engineering, all from the School of Engineering; and Dr. Eric Gaze, assistant professor of mathematics; and Dr. Kathryn Kohel, assistant professor of biology, from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Alfred University will cover room and board while the teams are on campus; their sponsoring school districts will be responsible for transportation costs. The competition is made possible by a gift to Alfred University from Erick Laine, chairman of the board of Alcas Corporation in Olean, NY., and an engineer himself. Additional details about the competition are available at the website: <http://engineering.alfred...>