

Engineer's Week Banquet of Central Florida: During February's Engineers' Week banquet in Central Florida, a \$2,000 donation was presented to the Internet Science and Technology Fair (ISTF). Half of that support was provided by the Florida Engineering Foundation. For the past 13 years, the University of Central Florida's College of Engineering and Computer Science has hosted the annual ISTF. As outlined on the opening page of its Web site (www.istf.ucf.edu), the ISTF is "Where Innovation Begins..." It challenges young students to use the Internet and information-technology tools to research how national critical technologies may be used to solve real-world problems. Student teams adhere to content guidelines based on national science content standards. They work with online scientists and engineers as technical advisers, then present their four-month-long projects in a Web site format for national judging.

Each year, 800-1,000 students from multiple states and countries participate as they develop teaming, communication and problem-solving skills needed for their continuing education and the workplace. Top awards are from the National Medal of Technology and Innovation Program of the the United States Patent and Trademark Office. One of the most recent national partners is the Southeastern Consortium for Minorities in Engineering, that includes over 200 pre-college schools.

As reported in the final evaluation by one of last year's teachers, the ISTF is a learning experience not only for the students, but also the teachers. Both groups learn about new areas of research and developments in various fields and technologies. Most important, however, is that as teachers work with their students more than usual when involved in such projects, they realize their students' potential, and help them realize it as well, taking them and their work to greater heights.