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No.15/08-09

# NEWS

**December 3, 2008**

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***SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE CELEBRATES NATIONAL AWARD-WINNING STUDENT RESEARCHER***

Selden, NY - Suffolk County Community College (SCCC), has announced that one of its May 2008 graduates, Elizabeth Millings, placed second in the chemistry category at the U.S. Department of Energy's inaugural Science and Energy Research Challenge (SERCh) at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee. For her second place finish, Ms. Millings received a \$1,500 scholarship award. During the SERCh competition, Ms. Millings presented findings from research she conducted while a student at SCCC.

Ms. Millings, and fellow SCCC student, Elizabeth Altman, were invited to attend the challenge and compete against the nation's top undergraduate scientific research students from across the country. During the competition, students presented abstracts, posters, and oral presentations detailing high level research they completed as DOE undergraduate interns.

Dr. Bill Valdez, director of Workforce Development for Teachers and Scientists for DOE's Office of Science, said, "The first annual Science and Energy Research Challenge highlights the research being done by 84 of the most promising undergraduate students in the United States, who are working on some of our most serious energy, environment and national security challenges." "These students performed their research at a DOE national laboratory or at a U.S. university that received funding from DOE and worked side-by-side with world class scientists on some of the most important scientific issues of our era."

Distinguished science students from institutions including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Yale University, Princeton University, University of California – Davis, and Rice University, participated in the competition. Only five of the 84 students attending the SERCh competition were from community colleges--and two of those five students were from Suffolk County Community College.

Ms. Millings' path to success in the world of science is directly attributable to her experience with two academic programs focused on increasing the number of students pursuing a degree in the sciences, mathematics or technology. These programs are CSTEP (Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program) and the National Science Foundation STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) program. CSTEP is designed to target underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students who are interested in careers in mathematics, science, technology and health-related fields. The program provides academic support services to undergraduate, graduate or professional school students admitted to two- or four-year postsecondary institutions in New York State. Similarly, the NSF STEM program also provides academic support to further nurture talented science students at the college level. The NSF STEM scholarship program at Suffolk County Community College is designed to aid students pursuing educational career paths in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields through: financial support; increased awareness of STEM career opportunities; internships; establishment of a community of STEM scholars; and encouragement to graduate and transfer to other higher education institutions to continue their STEM education. In the year that SCCC was awarded this scholarship grant, it was the only community college on Long Island, and only one of two colleges on Long Island, to have received this prestigious NSF STEM funding. The grant is the largest NSF grant to date for SCCC and provides almost \$500,000 for STEM scholarships for the period of 2006-2011.

As a result of the continuum of services offered through these programs, as well as the supportive academic environment at SCCC, Ms. Millings began researching the creation of a specific radiotracer – a compound that can be tracked by position emission tomography (PET) scanners to monitor the movement and interactions of a wide range of chemicals in the human body. While at Suffolk, her research was fortified by studying at Brookhaven National Laboratory, first under the Community College Internship (CCI) program, and then through the Science Undergraduate Laboratory Internship (SULI).

“I believe my experience at Suffolk County Community College encouraged me to focus on scientific research and its applications,” Ms. Millings stated. “I am hopeful that the work I am pursuing may, one day, enhance the accuracy of PET scans so that the treatment of tumors can be even more targeted.”

Ms. Millings, a resident of Central Islip, was a standout chemistry student at Suffolk and is now continuing her studies at Stony Brook University. She also serves as a mentor and tutor to other college-level and secondary school students.

Her co-advisors for the SERCh competition were Dr. Candice Foley, Professor of Chemistry and Associate Dean for Curriculum Development, and Nina Leonhardt, Associate Dean for Continuing Education. “This was a very intense competition,” said Associate Dean Leonhardt. It was a major accomplishment that Elizabeth's work was selected ahead of students from such recognized institutions as MIT.” Added Dr. Foley, “There is a long history of Suffolk students moving through our program and onto significant achievements. Elizabeth clearly has something special to offer the world of science.”

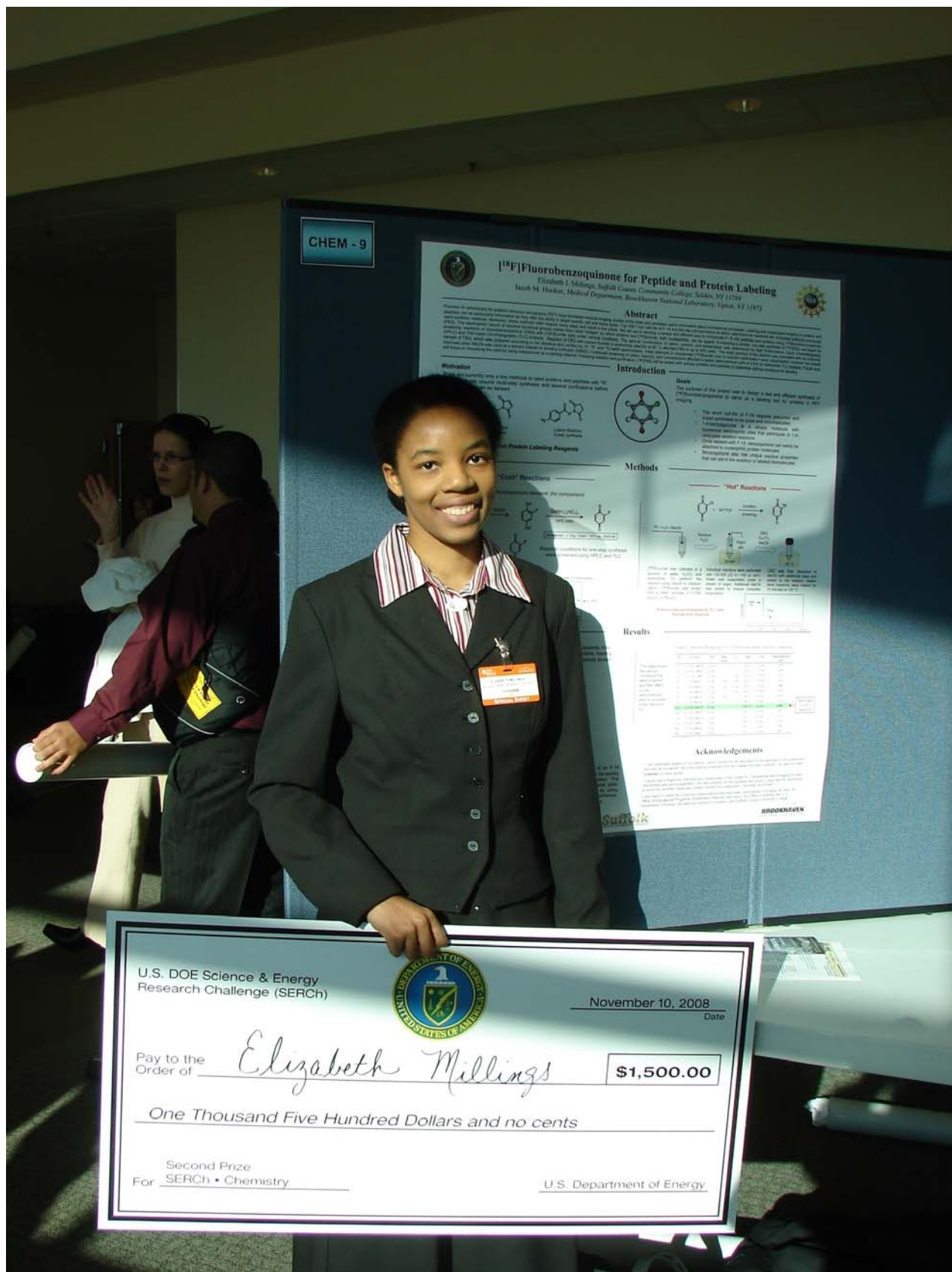


PHOTO CAPTION:

Elizabeth Millings poses beside her research poster, which placed second in the U.S. Department of Energy's Science and Energy Research Challenge.

About Suffolk County Community College

Suffolk County Community College (SCCC) is the largest community college in the State University of New York (SUNY) system, enrolling more than 23,000 students at its three campuses in Selden, Brentwood and Riverhead. SCCC offers the Associate in Arts (A.A.), Associate in Science (A.S.), and Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree, as well as a variety of certificate programs. Offering the lowest college tuition on Long Island, a highly respected Honors program, extensive extracurricular activities, championship athletic teams, and numerous unified transfer programs, SCCC is a first-choice college for Long Island students.

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