Regeneron Science Talent Search 2026 Recognizes America's Top Young Scientists, Awarding More Than $1.8 Million to High School Seniors for Innovative Research in Computational Mathematics, Neural Science, and Blood Cancer Treatment

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$250,000 top award goes to Connor Hill in America's longest running and most distinguished science and math competition

TARRYTOWN, N.Y. and WASHINGTON, March 10, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Inc. (NASDAQ: **REGN**) and Society for Science (the Society) announced that **Connor Hill, 17, of State College, Pennsylvania,** won the top award of $250,000 in the 2026 Regeneron Science Talent Search (STS), the U.S.'s oldest and most prestigious science and math competition for high school seniors.

Key Takeaways:

- This year marks the 85th anniversary of the Science Talent Search and Regeneron's 10 th year as the title sponsor; Regeneron is extending its title sponsorship through 2036, pledging $150 million to fuel the next generation of science and technology leaders.
- Forty finalists were honored at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., receiving more than **$1.8 million in awards** recognizing groundbreaking research, exceptional analytical rigor, exceptional problem-solving skills and potential to shape the future of STEM.

- **Top Three Winners:**

    - **Connor Hill, 17, of State College, Pennsylvania** won first place and **$250,000** for discovering a way to identify all the possible "noble polyhedra," highly symmetric shapes with flat sides and straight edges. He wrote a computer program to do the computations and proved there are two infinite families of noble polyhedra, as well as 146 isolated examples.
    - Second place and **$175,000** went to **Edward Kang, 17, of Hackensack, New Jersey** for using retinal images to train AI models on subtle patterns linked to autism and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder to create a screening tool called RetinaMind. He also created retinal cell models to study gene changes that may help explain why these differences occur.
    - Third place and **$150,000** went to **Iris Shen, 17, of The Woodlands, Texas**, for testing a potential cancer drug in clams to see if they could serve as an animal model for blood cancer drug discovery. In the clams, the drug had a similar effect to what researchers observe in human cells. She also tested a mix of other potential cancer drugs, which slowed the clams' tumor growth.

"Congratulations to the winners of this year's Regeneron Science Talent Search," said Maya Ajmera, President and CEO, Society for Science and Executive Publisher, Science News. "Their bold vision and perseverance reveal what the next generation of problem solvers truly looks like—and why our future is in capable hands. Their creativity, ambition and courage to confront the world's toughest challenges are exactly what this moment demands."

The Regeneron Science Talent Search is committed to providing a national platform for high school seniors to showcase original, innovative STEM research that proposes novel solutions to real-world issues. Finalists are evaluated for their scientific rigor, originality, critical thinking, leadership potential, and commitment to creating meaningful impact in crucial STEM fields.

"Congratulations to the winners of the 2026 Regeneron Science Talent Search, and to all the finalists who participated in this year's competition. These students represent exactly the kind of extraordinary talent scientific progress depends on," said George D. Yancopoulos, M.D., Ph.D., co-Founder, Board co-Chairman, President and Chief Scientific Officer of Regeneron and a 1976 Science Talent Search winner. "From my own experience as a Science Talent Search winner, I know the transformative power of this competition. That's why Regeneron is deepening our commitment and extending our title sponsorship for another decade. Through our support of Science Talent Search and our title sponsorship of the Regeneron International Science Fair, the world's largest high school science competition, we will invest more than $300 million from 2017 to 2036. We may never know where the next great scientific leader will come from, but we do know it's our responsibility to find that talent, fuel it, and give it every chance to change the world."

Other top honors from the competition include:

- **Fourth Place and $100,000:** Rachel Chen, 18, of Los Angeles, California for developing a concrete, visual way to describe systems of many quantum particles using Temperley-Lieb diagrams, expanding on a 1997 finding. Rachel illustrated how a magnetic field influences the entire quantum system using these simple point-and-line diagrams.
- **Fifth Place and $90,000:** Jerry Xu, 17, of Lexington, Massachusetts for building an AI program that compresses the features of protein molecules into strings of numbers. He showed that his model enabled a more efficient comparison of protein structure without the loss of important features. This could speed up genetic research and drug discovery.
- **Sixth Place and $80,000:** Leanne Fan, 18, of San Diego, California for building a device to simulate microgravity in order to study how wounds heal in space. With the device, she tested red light on injured flatworms and found that it sped up tissue regeneration by 95.2%. She also found that red light treatment speeds up wound repair in human models in normal gravity.
- **Seventh Place and $70,000:** Claire Jiang, 18, of Wyckoff, New Jersey for developing a cellular model of juvenile idiopathic arthritis (JIA). She treated cells used to study rheumatoid arthritis with bone morphogenetic protein 4, a protein linked to JIA joint damage. Her experiments showed they acted like JIA cells in their growth and gene expression.
- **Eighth Place and $60,000:** Leon Wang, 17, of Stamford, Connecticut, for finding two FDA-approved drugs that may also be effective against Alzheimer's disease. Both drugs reduce the activity of a cellular signaling pathway linked to an Alzheimer's gene. In lab-grown brain cells, the drugs reduced signs of damage due to the pathway.
- **Ninth Place and $50,000:** Jonathan Du, 18, of Mountain View, California for investigating the unrestricted finite factorization property. Factorization breaks down mathematical objects into simpler parts. Jonathan's work explores complicated algebraic systems where some elements have several factorizations, and others do not factor at all.
- **Tenth Place and $40,000:** Seth Nabat, 18, of Winnetka, California for building a machine learning program to quickly and accurately track particle collisions without sacrificing accuracy by favoring symmetry. Seth's program uses an unconstrained network to catch errors, and another network to find patterns in them.
- **Colin Jie Chu, 18, of Palo Alto, California was named the Seaborg Award winner** and selected to speak on behalf of the Regeneron Science Talent Search Class of 2026. The 40 finalists chose Colin as the person who best exemplifies their class and the legacy of nuclear chemist Glenn T. Seaborg, who won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1951 and served on the Society's Board of Trustees for 30 years.
- The remaining 30 finalists received $25,000 each. In total, Regeneron awarded $3.1 million in awards, including $2,000 to each top scholar and their school. Since the start of Regeneron's sponsorship in 2017 through this year's competition, Regeneron and the Society have engaged and inspired more than 20,000 of the nation's top young scientists, recognized 3,000 as Regeneron scholars, and awarded over $31 million in prizes.

Resources:

- 2026 Winner Media Kit (photos, bios, research summaries, b-roll, video)
- Virtual Project Showcase (All 40 finalist projects)
- Full List of 40 Finalists
- Top 300 Scholars
- Notable STS Alumni

What is the Regeneron Science Talent Search?

The Regeneron Science Talent Search, a program of Society for Science since 1942, is the United States' oldest and most prestigious science and math competition for high school seniors. This year, more than 2,600 students submitted original research in critical scientific fields and were judged by leading experts. Unique among high school competitions in the U.S. and globally, the Regeneron Science Talent Search identifies and supports the U.S.'s most promising future leaders in science as they develop innovative solutions to solve significant global challenges through rigorous research and discoveries. The program provides students with a national stage to present new ideas and challenge conventional ways of thinking.

For over eight decades, the Science Talent Search has rewarded talented high school seniors who dedicate countless hours to original research projects and present their results in rigorous reports that resemble graduate school theses. Collectively, STS alumni have received millions of dollars in scholarships and gone on to be awarded Nobel Prizes, Fields Medals, MacArthur Fellowships and numerous other accolades.

What is Regeneron's role?

For Regeneron, the Science Talent Search is a deeply personal commitment, as its co-Founders George D. Yancopoulos, M.D., Ph.D. and Leonard S. Schleifer, M.D., Ph.D. began their scientific careers as Science Talent Search participants. In 2017, Regeneron became the third long-term sponsor of the Science Talent Search, succeeding Westinghouse and Intel, with a 10-year, $100 million commitment to help reward and celebrate the best and brightest young minds. Since the beginning of this enduring sponsorship, through this year's Science Talent Search, Regeneron and the Society have engaged and inspired more than 20,000 of the nation's top young scientists, recognized 3,000 as Regeneron Scholars, and awarded over $31 million in prizes. In February 2026, the company renewed its sponsorship for another decade, increasing its investment by 50%, pledging an additional $150 million. Regeneron is also the title sponsor of the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF), a program of the Society and the world's largest high school science competition. Regeneron's support for these two premier programs totals more than $300 million from 2017 to 2036.

Learn more at https://www.societyforscience.org/regeneron-sts/ or www.regeneron.com/STEM

What is Society for Science?

Society for Science is a champion for science, dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of science and the vital role it plays in human advancement. Established in 1921, Society for Science is best known for its award-winning journalism through Science News and Science News Explores, its world-class science research competitions for students, including the Regeneron Science Talent Search, the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair and the Thermo Fisher Scientific Junior Innovators Challenge, and its STEM Outreach programming that seeks to ensure that all students have an opportunity to pursue a career in STEM. A 501(c)(3) membership organization, Society for Science is committed to inform, educate and inspire.

Learn more at www.societyforscience.org and follow us on Facebook, X, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

What is Regeneron?

Regeneron (NASDAQ: REGN) is a leading biotechnology company that invents, develops, and commercializes potentially life-transforming medicines for people with serious diseases. Founded and led by physician-scientists, our unique ability to repeatedly and consistently translate science into medicine has led to numerous approved treatments and product candidates in development, most of which were homegrown in our laboratories. Our medicines and pipeline are designed to help patients with eye diseases, allergic and inflammatory diseases, cancer, cardiovascular and metabolic diseases, hematologic conditions, infectious diseases, and rare diseases.

Regeneron believes that operating as a good corporate citizen is crucial to delivering on our mission. We approach corporate responsibility with three goals in mind: to improve the lives of people with serious diseases, to foster a culture of integrity and excellence, and to build sustainable communities. Our most significant philanthropic investments are in science education, a commitment we call STEM-Fueled™– our collection of programs and partnerships, including the Regeneron Science Talent Search (STS) and the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF), that fuel future scientific innovators to pursue bold ideas and advance world-changing solutions. Throughout the year, Regeneron empowers and supports employees to give back through our volunteering, pro bono, and matching gift programs. We are proud to be recognized on the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index and the Civic 50 list of the most “community-minded” companies in the United States.

For more information, please visit www.Regeneron.com or follow Regeneron on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook or X.

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