

UCSD Launches Annual Statistics

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Mathematicians at the University of California, San Diego, in collaboration with the Greater San Diego Math Council, have launched an annual statistics competition for San Diego high school students. The competition will recognize outstanding mathematics students and promote the field of statistics.

It will be held at UCSD on March 3. The top two students will each receive a \$500 prize that will be presented by Hirotugu Akaike, a Japanese mathematician and 2006 Kyoto Prize Laureate in the Basic Sciences, at an awards dinner following his Kyoto Prize lecture at UCSD on March 15th. The top five students and top three coaches will receive graphing calculators.

The competition will involve two exams, one multiple choice and one written, that require students to solve mathematics problems using intuition and creativity. The exams will cover the probability and statistics content from the California Mathematics Standards and the College Board Advanced Placement program.

Each school can enter a team of 3-8 members. The top three individuals will determine the team score. Home-schooled students can compete for individual awards. Students interested in entering the competition can contact Bruce Arnold for more information.

The cash prizes are being sponsored this year by the San Diego Chapter of the American Statistical Association. Texas Instruments is donating the graphing calculators. The competition is also soliciting future sponsors.

At the Kyoto Prize lecture, Professor Akaike will discuss the powerful statistical tool he developed, now known as the Akaike Information Criterion. AIC makes it possible to identify relationships in large volumes of data and has applications in virtually every field of science and engineering. Following Akaike's talk, mathematician Heisuka Hironaka, UCSD astrophysicist Richard Puetter and biologist Kenneth Burnham of Colorado State University will discuss how AIC facilitates research in their fields.

The Kyoto Prize lecture is free and open to the public. To secure your seat, please register in advance at <http://www.kyotoprize.org>.

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