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## **MASSACHUSETTS GIRL WINS \$20,000 FIRST PRIZE IN MATH COMPETITION**

*– 9 other top performers share additional \$23,000 in prizes –*

November 14, 2009—NEW YORK CITY Elizabeth Synge, of Boston University Academy in Massachusetts, won the \$20,000 prize for first place in the Advantage Testing Foundation's Math Prize for Girls competition held at NYU this morning. With an additional \$23,000 in prize money, the Math Prize for Girls represents the world's largest math award exclusively for young women in high school.

"We have endowed the Math Prize for Girls to encourage young women with exceptional potential to become the mathematical and scientific leaders of tomorrow" said Arun Alagappan, president of the Advantage Testing Foundation and founder of the competition.

Joy Zheng of Washington, Lynnelle Ye of California, and Jane Wang of New Jersey all tied for second place and won nearly \$6,000 each. 6 runners up earned \$1,000.

220 high school girls from across the nation participated in the competition at NYU's Courant Institute of Mathematical Sciences. The exam consisted of 20 complex problems covering algebra, geometry, trigonometry, combinatorics, and number theory. "The topics may be standard for high school, but the problems certainly aren't," said Dr. Ravi Boppana, Math Director at the Advantage Testing Foundation and primary author of the exam. "Even our simplest problem is too hard for a test such as the SAT."

The Advantage Testing Foundation is the public service arm of Advantage Testing, a private tutorial service dedicated to academic rigor, long-term educational development, and the proposition that tests are powerful vehicles for learning. "The mission of the Advantage Testing Foundation is to advance the educational opportunities of students whose backgrounds are currently underrepresented in higher education," Mr. Alagappan said.

He hopes the Math Prize for Girls will have far-reaching benefits beyond inspiring female students to pursue degrees in higher mathematics. "The United States continues to rank among the lowest of developed nations on international student assessments in math and science," he said. "If we are to keep pace with the rest of the world, we must dispel this absurd, dismaying stereotype that girls have less to do with math than boys."

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