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U of L iGEM teams bring home gold and silver awards

Both the University of Lethbridge high school and collegiate iGEM (International Genetically Engineered Machine) teams came home with shiny medals following the 2017 Giant Jamboree in Boston, Massachusetts.

The U of L high school team was awarded a silver and the collegiate team a gold, as well as nominations in three special categories, including Best Software, Best Education & Public Engagement, and Best Integrated Human Practices. In addition, the team received the Biosafety and Biosecurity Commendation.

“This year, it’s safe to say the U of L team was the highest-achieving Canadian team at this international competition,” says Dr. HJ Wieden, a professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and team advisor. “I am extremely proud of our students. They worked hard and these results prove their efforts were on the mark. What’s more, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in their presentation at the jamboree, mentioned the U of L’s work as a positive example.”

“The best part of iGEM was showcasing the innovative spirit, ability and willingness of the U of L to compete and excel on an international stage,” says Josh Friesen, a second-year biology student who competed at the Giant Jamboree for the first time.

The U of L high school team, with Dr. Brian Dempsey as principal investigator, included Kyle Bodell, Autumn Schmidt, Haroon Ahmed, Denysse Garcia, Nimaya De Silva, Stephanie Dang, Kelly Situ, Allison Leam, Chaeli Cowan, Halla Wagner, Candace Chan and Ross Oliver. Their project centred on producing environmentally friendly printer inks.

U of L collegiate team members are Taylor Sheahan, Keith Aiken, Sydnee Calhoun, Simone D’souza, Regan Evanson, Cynthia Fonderson, Josh Friesen, Jonathan Hampshire, Matthew Harding, Lane Harper, Chelsi Harvey, Chris Isaac, Rebecca Jeong, Chris Lowen, Derrik Motz, William Reid, Morag Runnett, Jessica Semmelrock, Sandhya Sunuwar, Kristi Turton, with Wieden as primary investigator. Their project focused on making synthetic biology safe and available for everyone.

The Giant Jamboree is an annual event that showcases synthetic biology projects from the iGEM Competition. The jamboree brings together hundreds of iGEM teams from universities around the world.

This news release can be found online – [iGEM Giant Jamboree](#).

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