Winter Edition 2023

The Beam

Mississippi Society of Radiologic Technologists

Inside This Issue

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Mississippi Society of Radiologic Technologists
Affiliated with the American Society of Radiologic Technologists

Happy 2024! I am truly honored for the opportunity to serve again as President of the Mississippi Society of Radiologic Technologists for the upcoming year. It is a blessing to be part of such an amazing organization. Because of the dedication and hard work of the MSRT's Board of Directors and its members, our society is strong and continues to grow. I look forward to continuing working with the Board of Directors to ensure our tradition of strong leadership.

We were so happy that Gulfport was able to host our annual conference this past October. I would like to thank everyone who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the MSRT's 81st annual conference was a success. The location and dates for the 82nd annual conference will be forthcoming. Please keep an eye on the MSRT website and Facebook page for updated information. We look forward to having you all join us at this year's conference!

It is more important than ever to strengthen the voice of our profession! One way to accomplish this is to get involved. Please contact a member of the Board if you would like information on how you can help. Volunteering is a wonderful way to network, build a resume, develop new leadership skills, meet others, and give back to our profession!

I am excited to see what is in store for 2024 and am again thankful for the opportunity to serve as president of the MSRT!

Sincerely,

Jessica Reid B.S., R.T.(R)
MSRT President

Mississippi Society of Radiologic Technologists

Affiliated with the American Society of Radiologic Technologists

The **MSRT Business Meeting** for the 81st Annual Conference was held at The Gulfport Event Center in Gulfport, MS, on October 24, 2023. Dr. Asher Beam, Chairman of the MSRT, welcomed those present and thanked everyone for attending conference.

A quorum was established, and the meeting was called to order by the MSRT Chairman, Dr. Asher Beam, at approximately 3:33 p.m.

The minutes from Conference 2022 were accepted as published in the BEAM.

The following reports were given:

1. **Treasurer:**
   a. Please refer to **Appendix A** for Annual Financial Report that was presented at the business meeting.
2. **Vice President:** Nothing to report.
3. **Secretary:** Nothing to report.
4. **Editor of The Beam:** Nothing to report.
5. **ASRT Affiliate Delegates**: Dr. Lee Brown and Zack Gray represented the MSRT as ASRT Affiliate Delegates at the June 2023 ASRT House of Delegates Meeting.
6. **Operating Budget:**
   a. Dr. Chelsea Stephens presented the proposed operating budget for 2023-2024 (Refer to **Appendix B**).
7. **President:** Nothing to report.
8. **Conference Coordinator/Conference Chair:** Nothing to report.
9. **Committee Chairs**: Nothing to report.
10. **Nominations:**
    a. President- Jessica Reid

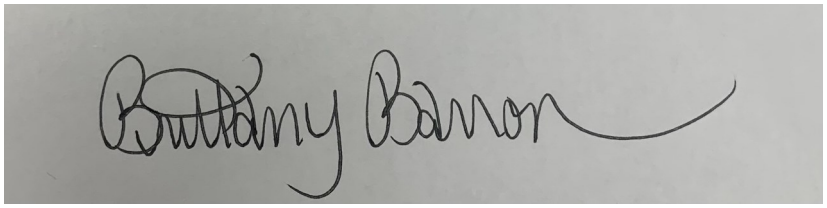
b. Vice President- Zack Gray
c. Secretary- Dr. Brittany Barron (declined), Kelly Fenwick
d. ASRT Affiliate Delegate- Adrian Brewer

Old Business:

MSRT Districts: All districts have been dissolved and money from those accounts have been deposited into the MSRT account.

With no further business to be discussed, the meeting adjourned at approximately 3:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Brittany W. Barron, Ed.D., R.T.(R)(M)(CT)(ARRT)

Technologist of the Year

Adrian Brewer, R.T.(R)

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Allison Puente, M.S.R.S.,
R.T.(R)(CT)(ARRT)

Shellie Pike, M.S.R.S., R.R.A.,
R.T.(R)(CT)(ARRT)

Richard "Fuge" Fucillo, M.A.,
R.T.(R)(CT)(ARRT)

Daniel DeMaio, M.Ed.,
R.T.(R)(CT)(ARRT)

Kristi Moore, Ph.D.,
R.T.(R)(CT)(ARRT)

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Carmen George, M.S.R.S., R.T.(R)(ARRT)

Ron Gilbert, M.S., R.T.(R)(ARRT), CIIP

Cathy Cooper, M.S., R.T.(R)(CT)(BD)(ARRT)

Missy Curtis, M.S., R.T.(R)(CT)(ARRT), CNMT

Brandon A. Smith, M.B.A., M.S.R.S., R.T.(R)(VI)(ARRT), CIIP

Student Manuscripts

All student's papers were submitted to three (3) out of state judges for the student manuscript competition. Of those, six (6) are selected to present their topic at the annual conference. Listed below are the top (6) student manuscripts.

- "The Mystery Behind Alexander Litvinenko"
  — Fallon Stephens
  1st Place
- "The Radium Girls"
  — Taylor Lay
  2nd Place
- "PET Imaging for Alzheimer's"
  — Madison Foxworth
  3rd Place
- "The Role of MRI in the Diagnoses of Mental Illness"
  — Anna Lloyd
- "Radiation Exposure in Fluoroscopy-Guided Procedures"
  — Chris Dyess
- "Paleoradiology: Using Radiologic Techniques to Examine"
  —Lakin Hamm

Student Manuscript 1st Place Recipient

The Mystery Behind Alexander Litvinenko

Fallon Stephens

Abstract

Alexander Litvinenko was the man who solved his own murder. His case is one that, to this day, shocked the world and showed just how cruel people in influential rankings can be. Litvinenko had an extensive military background, where he worked his way up from nothing. He took a natural lead in this line of work and quickly made a name for himself. Working his way up so fast was an honor until he saw how corrupt and evil his leaders were. After publicly shaming and turning against the Russian government, things took a sharp turn, and Litvinenko found himself in grave danger. Alexander Litvinenko unknowingly became involved in a planned attack as revenge for speaking out against Russian officials. This attack left Litvinenko with a mysterious illness that stripped his body of life from the inside out. After extensive tests and trials, doctors found it to be a radioactive substance, polonium-210, that had made Litvinenko so ill. Before law enforcement could become involved, Alexander Litvinenko solved his own murder and, shortly after, died.

Keywords: Alexander Litvinenko, polonium-210, radioactive substance, mysterious illness, danger, murder, Russian government,

The Poisoning of Alexander Litvinenko

Movies, TV shows, true crime documentaries, and countless news articles mention murder. The unsettling, disturbing, and depressing stories of victims and their families are things that happen more frequently than they should. Almost everyone has seen some form of a murder case. One thing all murder cases have in common is that after the victim dies, law enforcement solves the case; however, there is one case that many have not heard of and is considerably different from the rest. The murder of Alexander Litvinenko had numerous twists and turns; however, the biggest shock is that he solved his own murder.

Early Life

Alexander Litvinenko was born on December 4th, 1962, in Voronezh, Russia, to his parents, Nina and Walter Litvinenko. Owen (2016) stated that life was simple for the family until Walter and Nina filed for divorce in Litvinenko's early childhood years. Like many children of divorced parents, Litvinenko suffered from the impact of the separation. Though this situation allowed for a rough childhood, things took a turn for the better when Litvinenko's grandparents took him in (Owen, 2016).

Around 1980, Litvinenko finished high school and was ready to expand his schooling through higher-level education. After completing the steps of admission to neighboring universities, a decline in enrolment caused a minor setback. This setback, however, seemed to play in his favor because he found that he instead wanted to pursue a path in military work. Litvinenko grew up hearing stories from his grandfather, who served in the Second World War, which heavily inspired him to have a career in this line. The young 17-year-old was eager to begin serving his country and soon enrolled in a military institution (Owen, 2016).

In that same year,1980, Litvinenko began completing rigorous military training, which went on for just over five years. After training concluded, he graduated as a lieutenant and continued to serve in one of Russia's armed forces. Life was going well for Litvinenko; he married, started a family, and had a well-respected position in military work in 1988. His hard work began to take notice when he received a prestigious job offer for one of Russia's top government positions, the Committee for State Security (KGB). During this time, the KGB was known as the Committee for State Security and was an important, dangerous position. Serving in the KGB meant more intense training, including intelligence training, which was only to be completed at the main office in Moscow (Owen, 2016).

In 1991, Litvinenko completed the intelligence portion and became stationed for the Economic Security and Organized Crime Unit, where he carried out numerous duties, such as managing agents and analytical tasks. While working in this unit, Litvinenko met countless political figures, one being Boris Berezovsky. Boris had a high role in the KGB and was also said to be a heavy contributor to Vladimir Putin's presidency. Litvinenko and Berezovsky developed a professional bond and a personal friendship that would later save one of their lives (Owen, 2016).

Dangers in the Field

In 1994, Litvinenko transferred to the Anti-Terrorism Department (FSB). He continued to see the extreme dangers of this work and how fraudulent the political powers were. In a career he thought he would serve, protect, and honor, he would soon find that it was nothing but lies, fraud and murder. Litvinenko served and maintained citizenship in Russia until the press conference of 1998 (Owen, 2016).

Litvinenko participated in a public conference where he and other members criticized the FSB. The men publicly slandered the government and understood that their lives could be at risk from doing so. These men have seen first-hand assassinations of innocent people just because the Russian government wanted them out, so with them being aware of that; it was clear that they'd had enough. More FSB members were finding the harsh reality of Russia's political society, one of them being Boris Berezovsky, Litvinenko's close friend (Owen, 2016).

It turns out that Berezovsky and Vladimir Putin had a disagreement shortly after Putin's successful presidential election in the year 2000. Specific conflict issues between the two are unknown, but it left Berezovsky with the decision to resign from his position and leave Russia for good. Berezovsky went through countless legal battles to request citizenship in the United Kingdom, which settled in 2003, where he was granted asylum (Owen, 2016). Being authorized for asylum meant he was now offered safety as a citizen in a new country against Russia, as a political refugee, in the event of Russia posing a threat (Merriam (n.d.).

Litvinenko continued in the FSB despite internal conflicts until he received a specific task ordering him to assassinate someone. Dangerous assignments were not out of the ordinary, but this was too far. The instructions arrived straight from the FSB, and Litvinenko was tasked to murder Boris Berezovsky. This assignment was too much for Litvinenko because it was to murder an innocent man and a personal friend. The cruel demand went against Litvinenko's values, so he refused to complete the order (Owen, 2016).

The New Life for Alexander Litvinenko

In October of 2000, Litvinenko fled Russia and followed Berezovsky's footsteps; in hopes of creating a new, safer life for himself and his family. Litvinenko was granted asylum in the United Kingdom and hoped to unveil the vile lies the Russian government had been hiding.

Even though Alexander had minor incidents of publicly shaming the Russian government during his employment, he could now speak freely without fearing for his life or career (Owen, 2016).

Throughout his time in the United Kingdom, Alexander brought his concerns to light and made everyone aware of the horrendous actions caused by Russia's political powers. While his new life in London was taking off, he continued to stay in touch with former members of the KGB, Andrey Lugovoy and Dmitri Kovtun.

Lugovoy and Kovtun met Litvinenko while working for the KGB, and though the men resigned from their positions, they still resided in Russia. On occasion, Lugovoy and Kovtun would fly to London to visit Litvinenko, where they would discuss political and personal matters. Both men were frequent flyers to London and ex-members of the KGB, so Litvinenko had no reason to believe there was about to be a sick and twisted act portrayed on him (Owen, 2016).

The day is now November 1st, 2006. Lugovoy and Kovtun have arrived in London and are eager to meet with Litvinenko for a scheduled meeting. The men met at the Millennium Hotel for tea, and Lugovoy and Kovtun appeared first. When Litvinenko arrived, he greeted the men at the table, where Lugovoy quickly mentioned that he could not stay long due to an event he and his family were attending. All three men sat comfortably at the small table with an elegantly plated tea spread arranged by the hotel staff (Real, 2019).

The men began to chat, and Litvinenko listened as he poured a cup of tea from the kettle. As Litvinenko drank his tea, he noticed it was cold. He wondered how long the other men had been sitting there, considering how cold his tea was. Since tea is normally served hot, a cold cup was not the most appealing, but there was something else suspicious about this cup of tea. To not make an ugly appearance, Litvinenko took about three or four sips of his tea before setting it

down. Before they knew it, the time had come, and Lugovoy said he must leave to meet with his family. The men got up, concluded, and parted ways (Real, 2019).

The Poison

During the same day, not long after the meeting, Litvinenko fell ill. An ominous pain overtook his body, and he knew something was wrong. He's rushed to a nearby hospital called Barnet General, and d spite efforts, staff was unsuccessful in finding the cause of the sickness. Litvinenko could not move, speak, or walk and was in excruciating pain. Medical staff did what they could, but on November 3rd, 2006, the team decided to transport Litvinenko to a higher- level trauma center, University College Hospital (Real, 2019).

At University Hospital, medical staff considered his symptoms were from an ingested poison. Every test came back negative, doctors were confused, and everyone was at a loss. As doctors spoke with Litvinenko, they told him he may have consumed an unknown poison. They explained that they were unsuccessful in find ing any thing and wanted to know if he could have recently ingested a harmful toxin. When Litvinenko heard this pos sibility, alarm bells began going off. When he worked for the KGB, he knew that poisoning was a common route for Russian officials to use, one of those being thallium. Thallium is a toxic, heavy metal poi son that tar gets the central nervous system and can result in death (Owen, 2016). Litvinenko knew this theory may sound like a stretch, especially since he was now away from Russia, but he mentioned the idea anyway. The new approach of thallium only led doctors so far because every heavy metal test they ran came back nega tive (Real, 2019).

Time was ticking, and not much was left. Staff at University Hospital felt like they attempted every thing; every test, hypothesis, and scan, but it led them nowhere. Litvinenko was

dying from a mystery illness no one could solve. Staff grew worried they would never find a cause until it was too late until someone mentioned a postmortem exam (Real, 2019).

Postmortem exams, also called autopsies, are tests conducted by specialized pathologists on a body that is no longer living. These tests can determine the cause of death and certain illnesses or answer other questions raised upon death (NHS 2022). At this point, Alexander is still alive, so how would a postmortem exam take place?

Medical professionals started planning a living postmortem exam on Litvinenko in a way that would not harm him further. The idea was to inspect all wounds, gather samples, and complete a full head-to-toe examination. During their examination discussion, one individual mentions the idea of a radioactive substance acting as the invader. This new idea would make sense, given the thallium theory, previous negative tests, and how radioactive material would not show under standard hospital tests (Real, 2019).

Two weeks have passed, and Litvinenko is on the edge of life. When the postmortem exam concluded, the medical team prepped to send all bodily samples to an off-site atomic weapons lab for the possibility of a radioactive substance and conducted another round of in- hospital tests. Unlike the other times when samples came back, they came back without any results, but this time, it was conclusive. An expert noticed a micro change in a urine sample that reacted as polonium (Real, 2019).

It's Polonium

The answer was clear, polonium, a rare, toxic, radioactive substance. Further tests concluded that this form of polonium is known as Polonium-210 (PO-210), where many have said it to be the deadliest toxin in the world. Found in just fractions of uranium, PO-210 is a natural isotope that is rare to find and even harder to acquire. Every year, less than 100 grams of

PO-210 is produced in the world (Brunka et al., 2022). To put it in perspective, imagine one stick of butter or even two hard-boiled eggs, and that is roughly the amount 100 grams equals to. After production, that small amount is divided between countries and shipped to specialized distributors (Brunka et al., 2022).

At this time, there were not many cases with PO-210, so it was unknown how exactly this would affect someone. Fast forward to today, and scientists have discovered many qualities related to this toxin (Brunka et al., 2022). There are many studies conducted on whole-body exposure from ionizing radiation, but this substance was radioactive and won't behave like an x- ray (Jacobson et al., 1949). Unlike ionizing radiation, PO-210 attacks the body from within instead of entering the skin; if this substance encounters skin, there will not be biological damage. Damage from this substance occurs after inhalation, ingestion, or through a physical sore and directly targets the reticuloendothelial system (Brunka et al., 2022).

Scientists know PO-210 absorbs in blood easier than others due to its high solubility rate. When it appears in the bloodstream, it travels quickly and attacks all soft tissues, especially bone marrow and organs such as the liver, kidneys, spleen, and even hair follicles. Though absorption times differ from organ to organ, it typically takes about a month or two for the human body to absorb this substance (Harrison et al., 2007).

Once absorption takes place, there are a plethora of symptoms that occur in the body. Patients may start by showing signs of extreme nausea and bloody diarrhea. These early signs may mimic the symptoms of radiation poisoning; however, PO-210 will soon develop into much more, as the high alpha particles cause the most harm. As the substance makes its way through each organ, more symptoms develop. Patients may become anemic, develop leukocytosis, bleed internally, and lose all hair. Countless gastrointestinal problems interrupt the intestines and cause

an immense amount of pain. Kidneys become damaged and lead to failure and inability to function. Almost every vital organ is affected and slowly shuts down (Harrison et al., 2007).

Patients have up to one hour after consumption to seek treatment with a chance to live. Unfortunately, treatment may be near impossible for those unaware of consumption. Patients that seek medical help within the hour receive a gastric lavage, which is a procedure that clears out all fluid and fecal matter and cleanses the gastrointestinal tract with the hopes of flushing out the poison. After cleansing, the patient may receive rounds of anti-nausea medications, intravenous fluids, and pain-relieving drugs. Patients seeking help way longer than the recommended time may acquire the same treatments but may not be successful (Harrison et al., 2007).

The End of Alexander Litvinenko

As one might guess, in the case of Litvinenko, he was well over the one-hour limit and was on his deathbed. At this point, Litvinenko has been in the hospital for 21 days, with the only progress being the PO-210 diagnosis. While this was a step in the right direction, everyone was still left wondering how this happened and who did it. Litvinenko's doctor confronted him with the diagnosis, and the answer became clear as day (Owen, 2016).

Litvinenko started putting all the puzzle pieces together. During the early days at the hospital, he mentioned possibly being poisoned with thallium. Though he was negative for thallium, he was positive with PO-210. The diagnosis led him to believe this was an attack by the Russian government. The only Russian personnel he encountered were Lugovy and Kovton for tea the day his sickness began. It became clear why the tea was so strange and how the men were in such a rush. PO-210, an easily water-soluble substance, was planted in Litvinenko's tea. It was almost the perfect murder.

On the night of November 22nd, Litvinenko fell into cardiac arrest. Medical personnel reacted with compressions that lasted over 30 minutes. Out of nowhere, a faint heartbeat appeared, and Litvinenko was resuscitated. During that night, his family stood close by. His beloved friend, Boris Berezovsky, and his wife, Marina Litvinenko, held his hand, knowing there wouldn't be much longer. Litvinenko drew everyone near and proceeded to say this quote. "I have no doubt whatsoever that this was done by the Russian Secret Services. Having knowledge of the system, I know that the order about such a killing of a citizen of another country on its territory, especially if it is something to do with Great Britain, could have been given by only one person... That person is the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin (Owen, 2016)." Litvinenko died shortly the next day, on November 23rd, 2006.

The unfortunate murder of Alexander Litvinenko was a case that shocked the world. As one found out in the end, Litvinenko was the one who solved his own murder. A brave, caring, intelligent human who worked to keep their country safe; has now been murdered by the leader of that country. Polonium-210 took a horrific toll on Litvinenko's body and left him on his deathbed, pounds lighter, sickly pale, and without a single hair on his body. Litvinenko may be gone, but his family lives at peace, knowing his murder is solved. Though Alexander Litvinenko's story is upsetting, it is a forever reminder of the horrific crime that took place and shines a light on the evil individuals who misuse their power.

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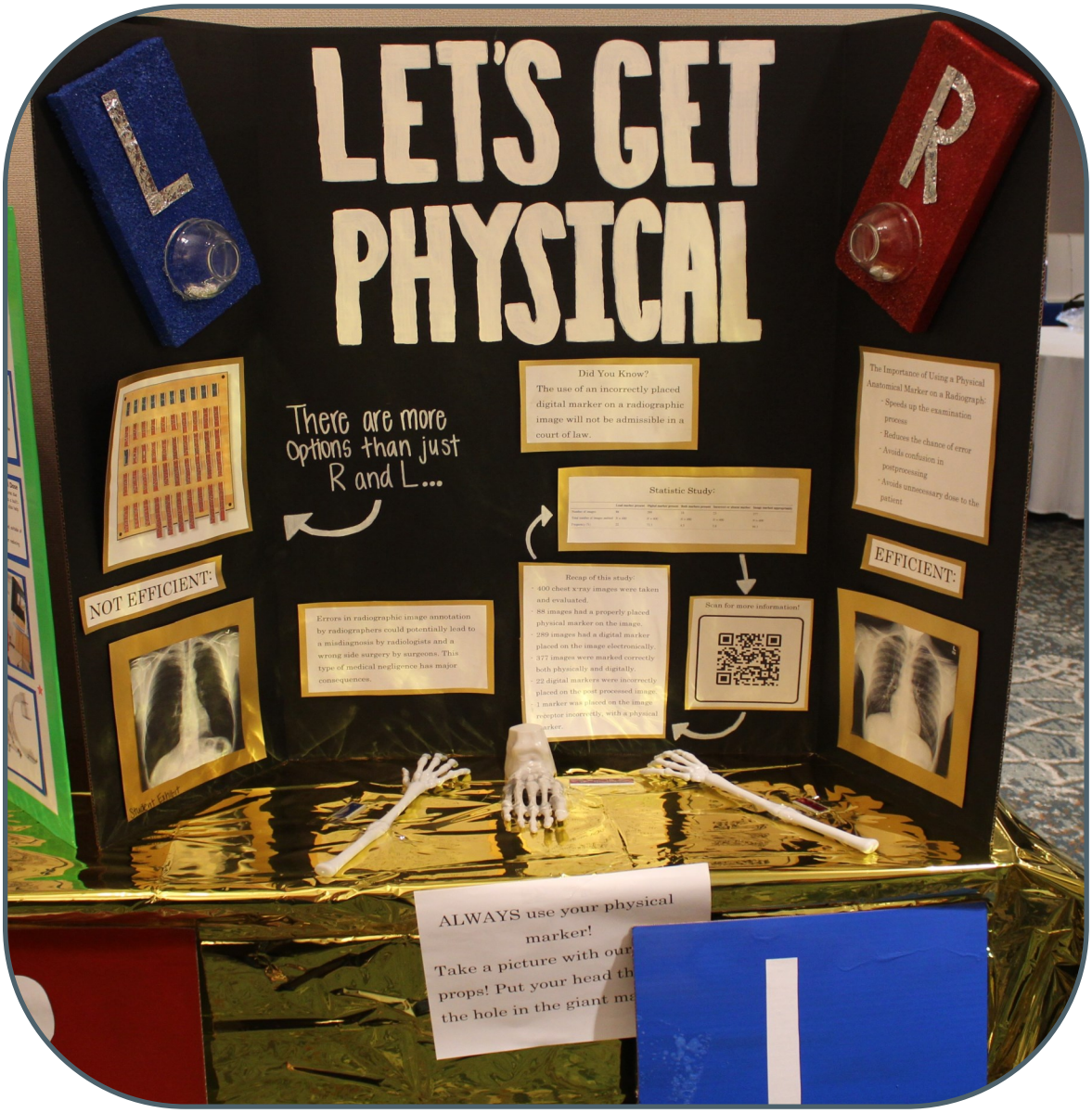
Student Exhibits

In the student exhibit competition, we had a total of 23 exhibits submitted and displayed at conference. Awards are given to first, second, and third place. The People's Choice award is given to the exhibit receiving the most votes from attendees at conference as their favorite exhibit.

- "Let's Get Physical"
  — Mallory Irby and Paige Johnson
  1st Place
- "Nuclear Medicine"
  — Natalie Broom and Elizabeth Boyd
  2nd Place
- "Murder on My Mind"
  — Desiree Delaney, Karli Martin, Logan Hearn, and Maegan Warren
  3rd Place and People's Choice

Student Exhibits



1st Place

Let's Get Physical

Mallory Irby and Paige Johnson

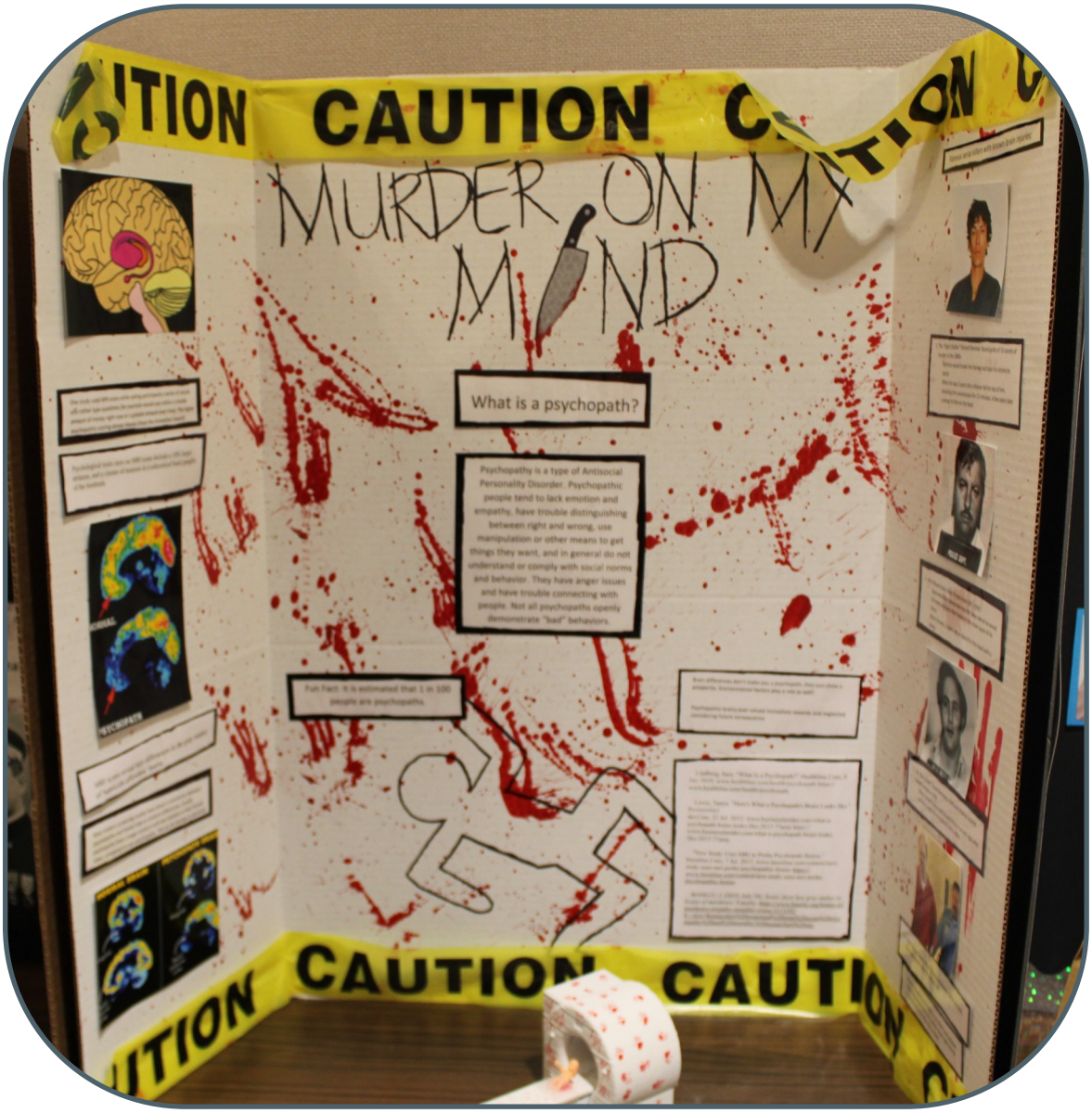
Student Exhibits

2nd Place

Nuclear Medicine

Natalie Broom and Elizabeth Boyd

Student Exhibits

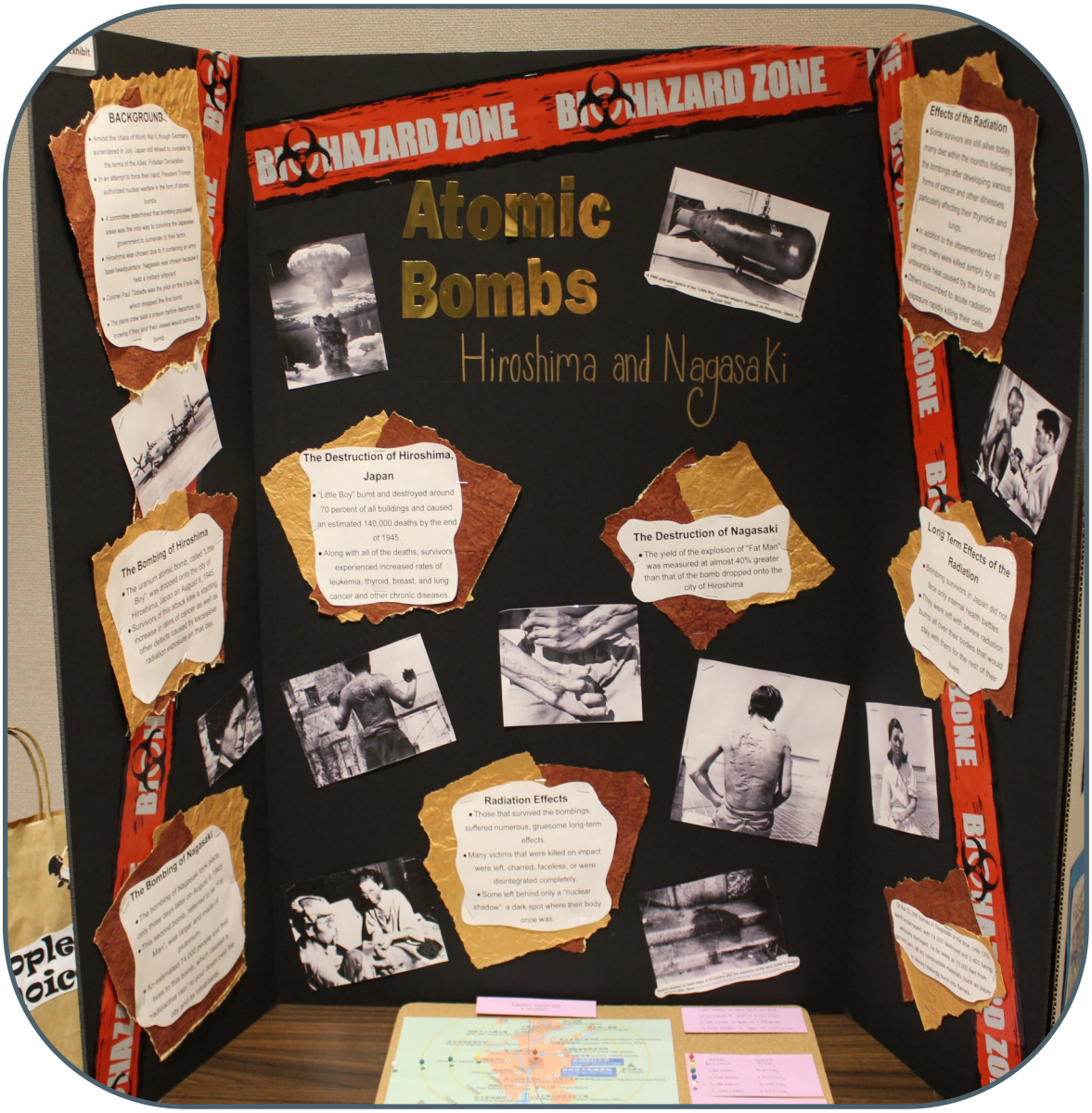


3rd Place and People's Choice

Murder on My Mind

Desiree Delaney, Karli Martin, Logan Hearn, and Maegan Warren

Student Exhibits



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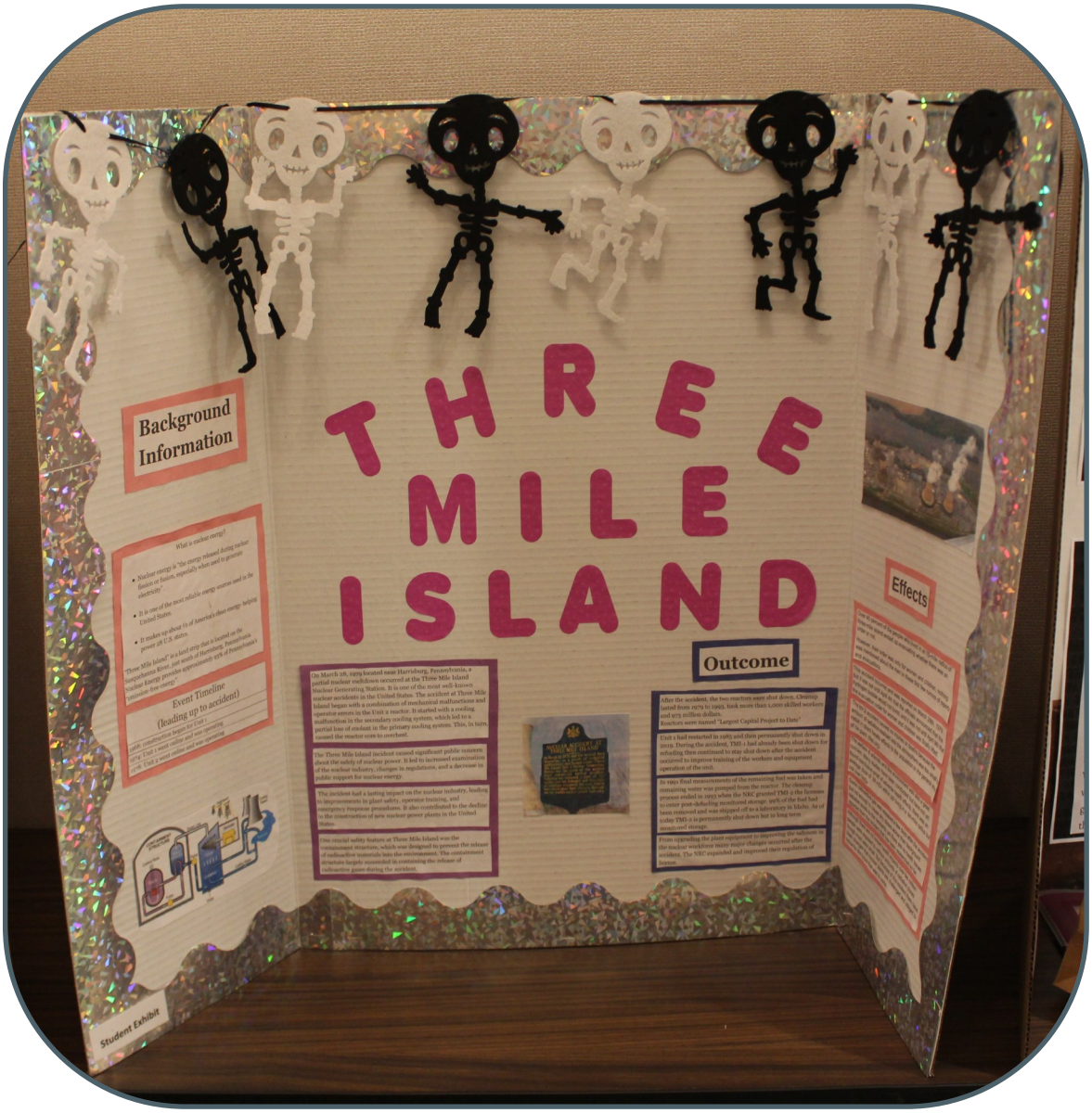

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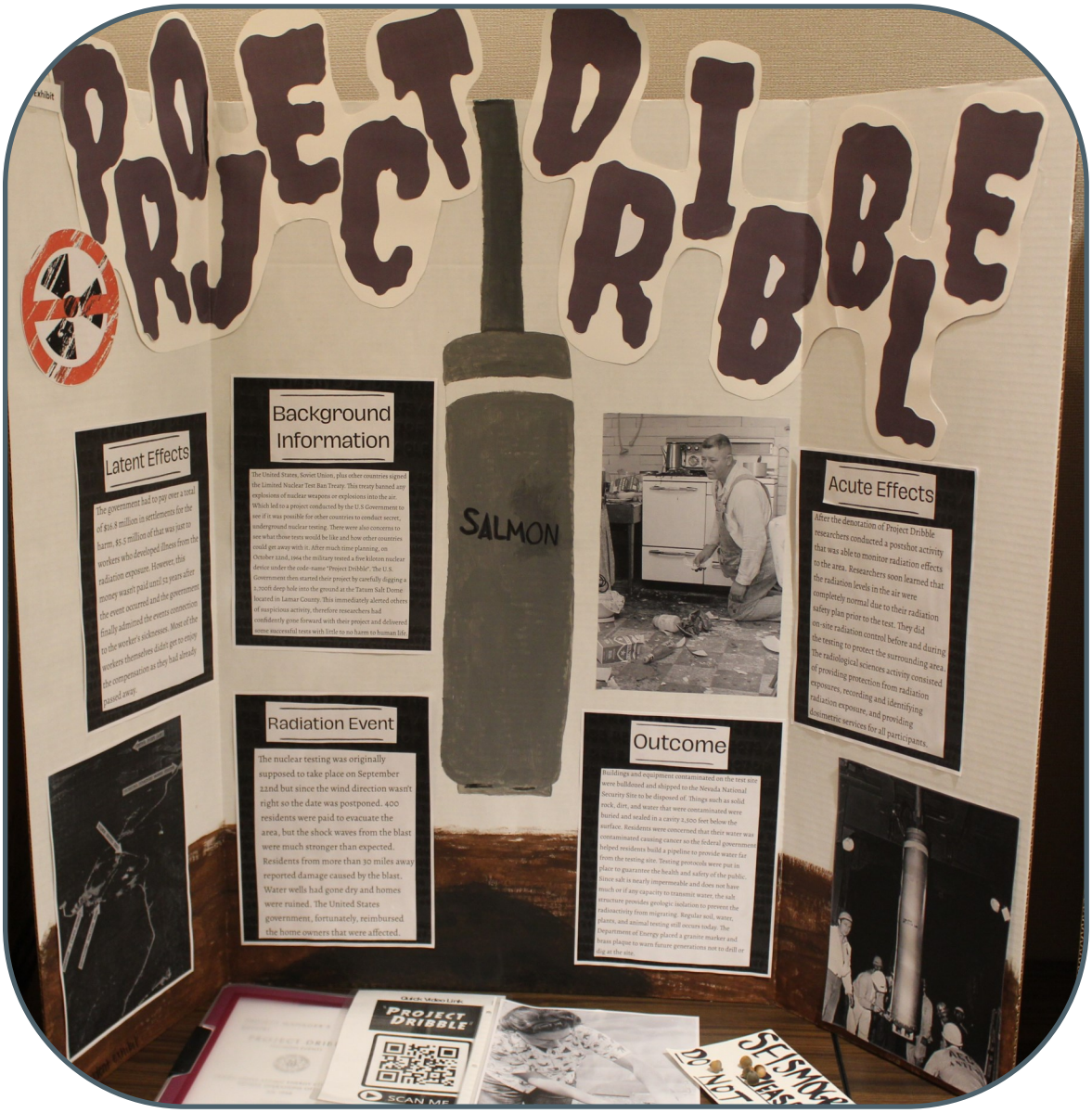

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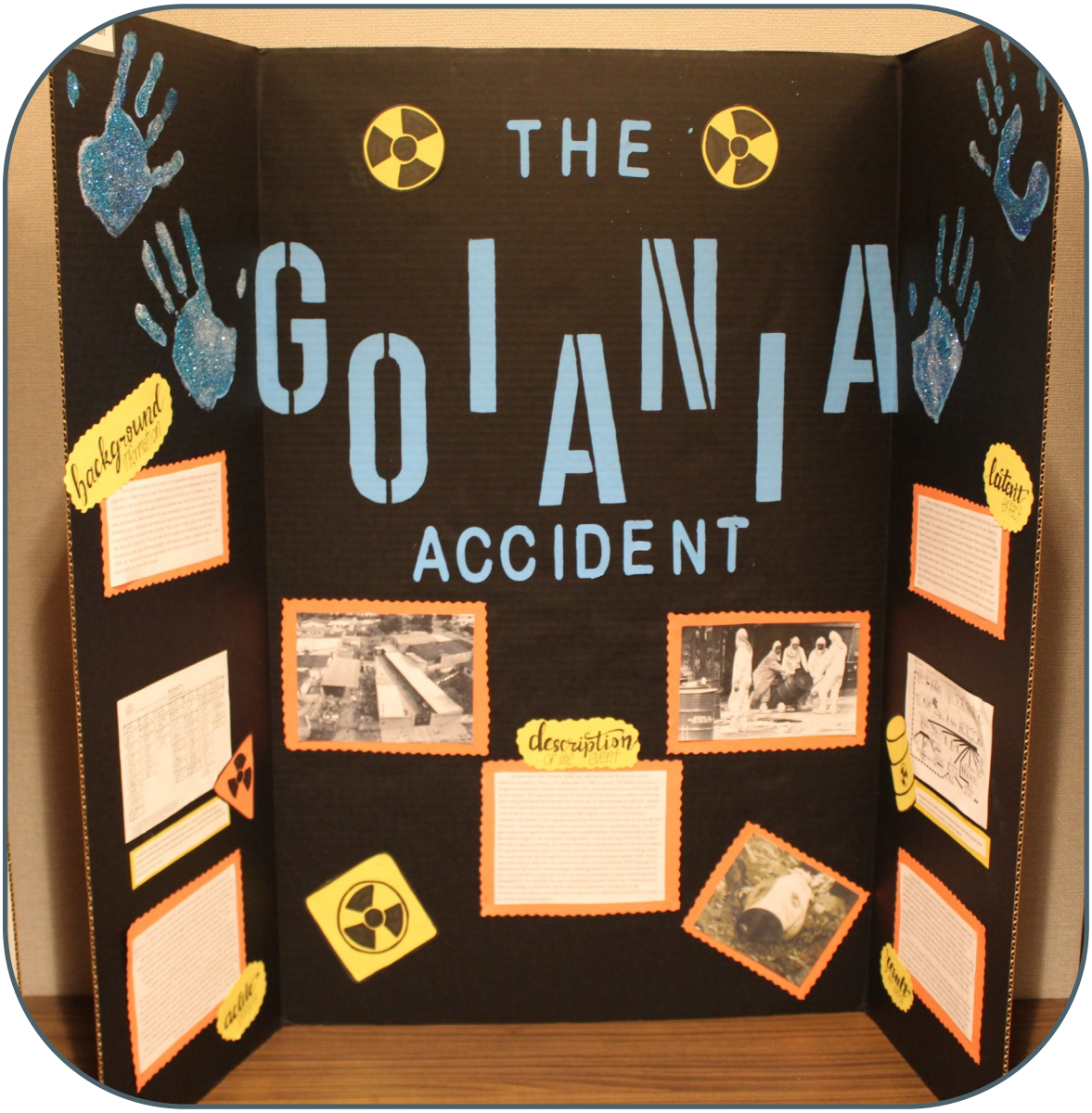

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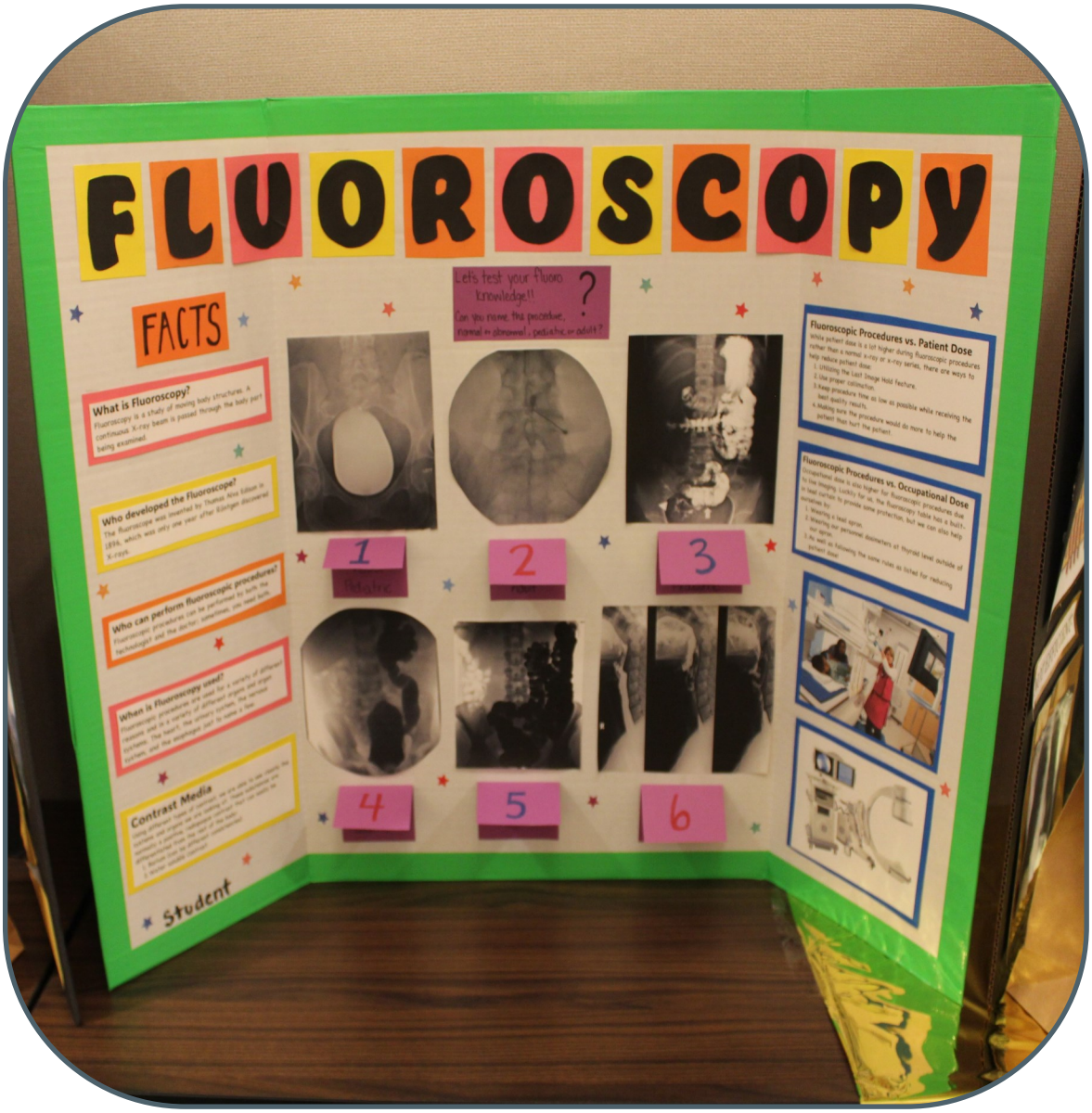

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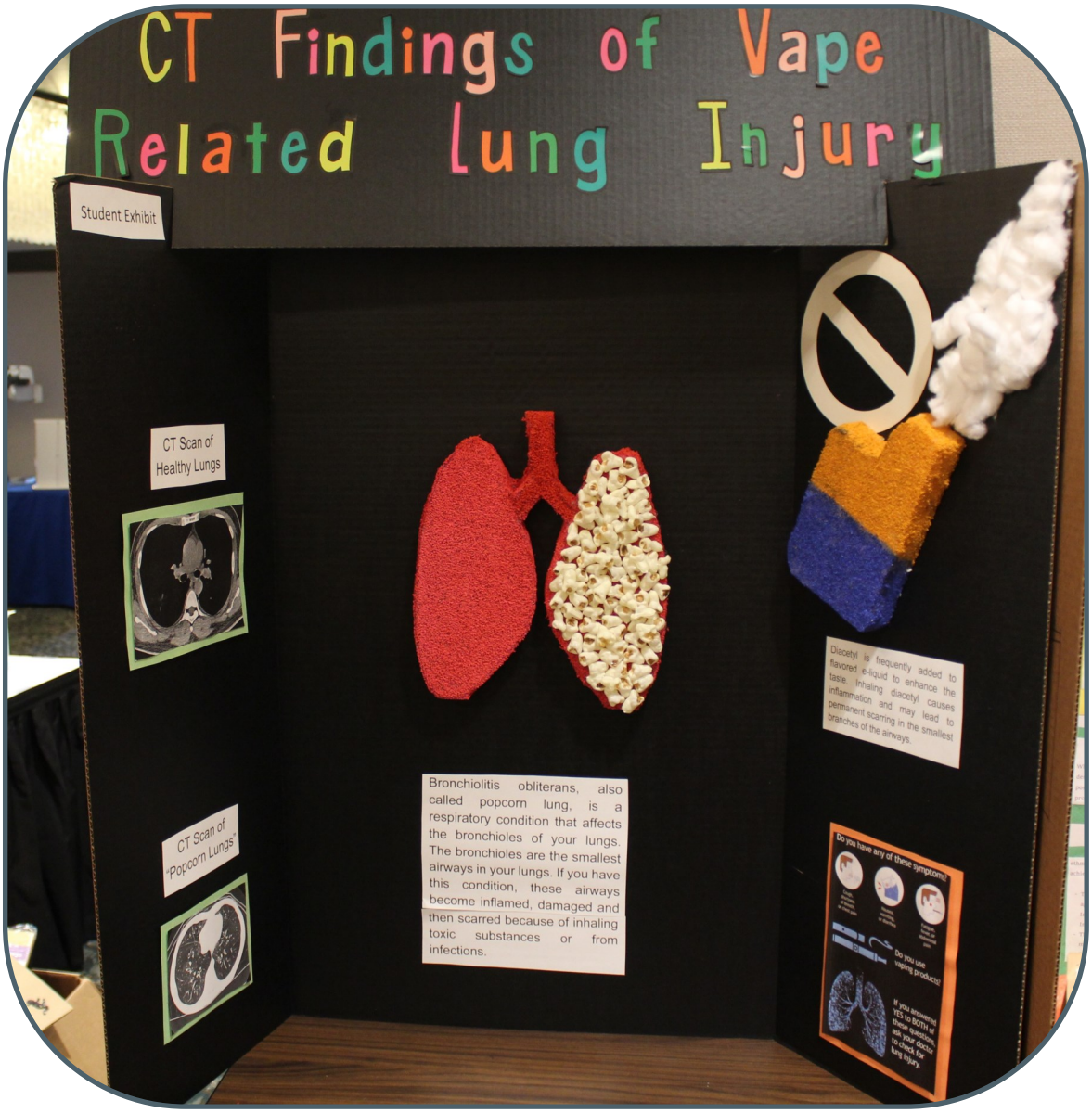

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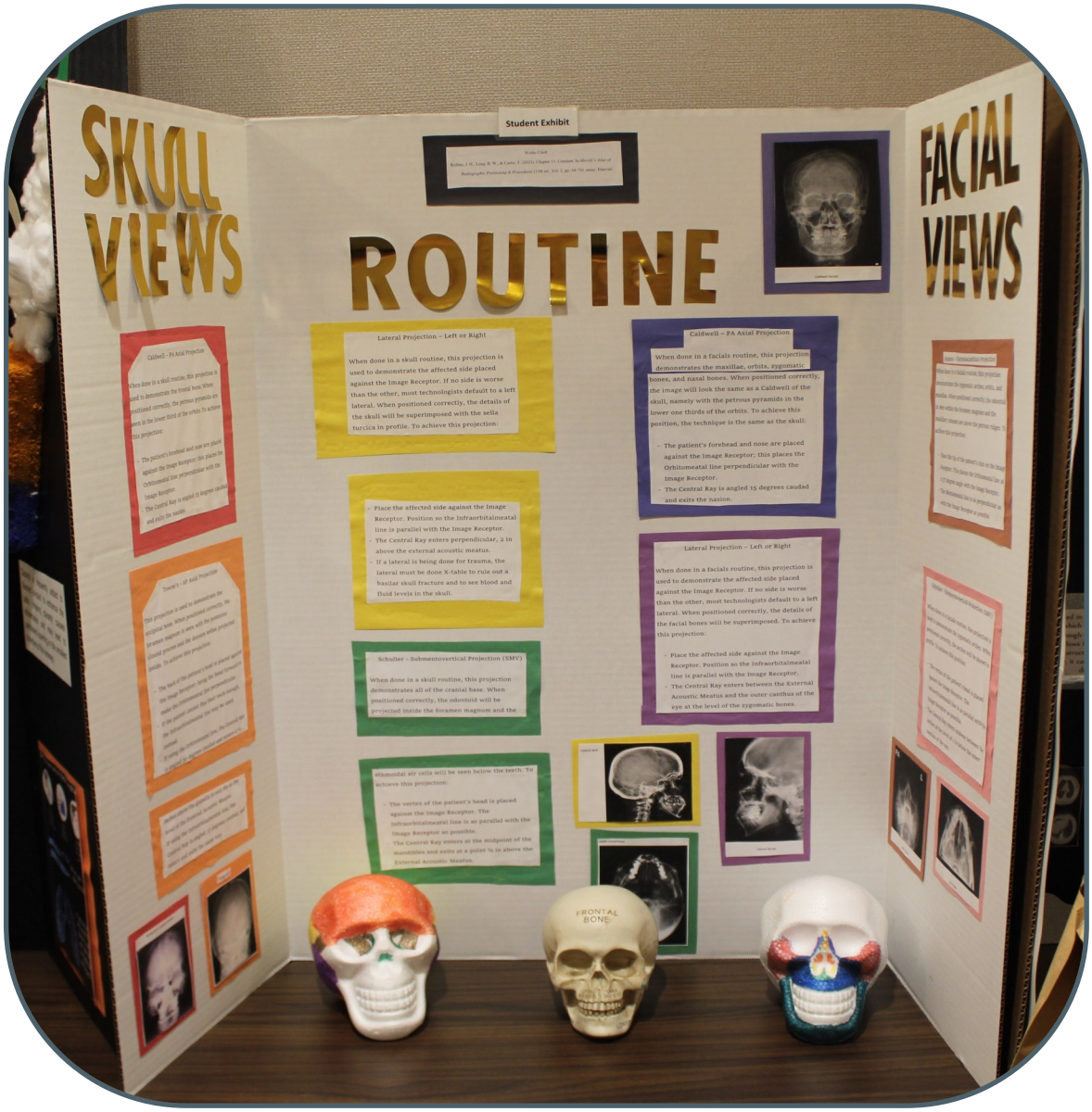

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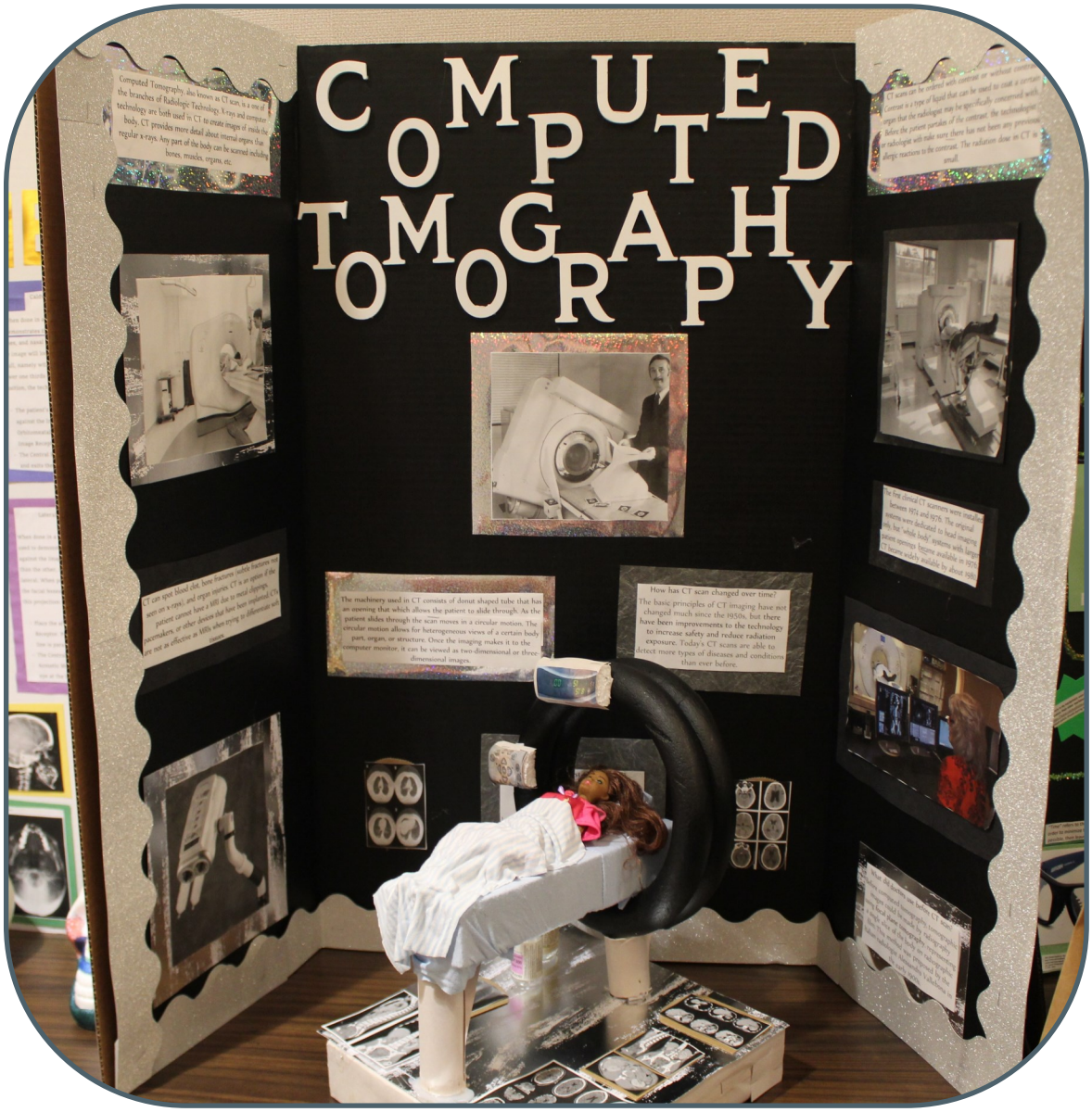

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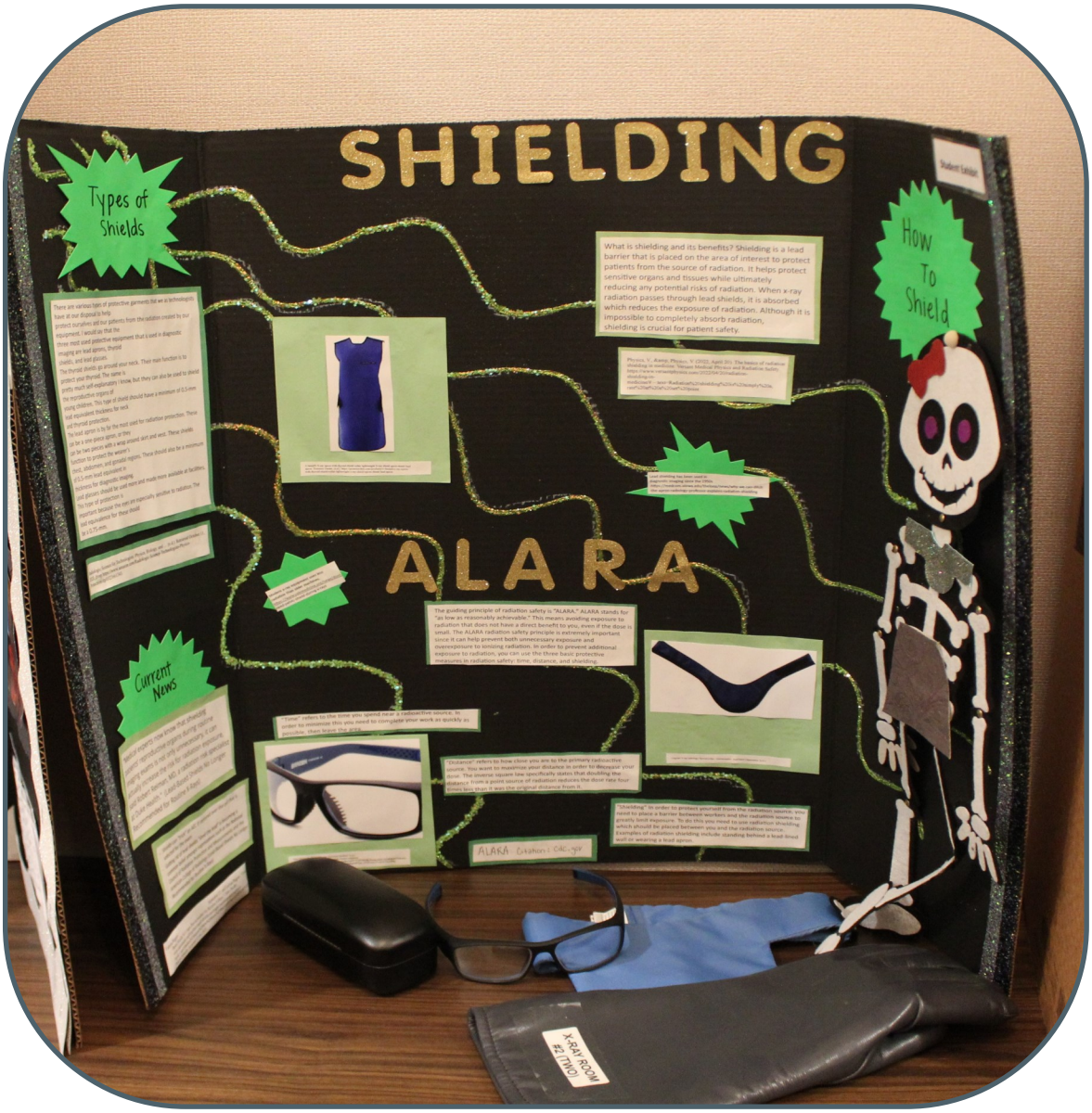

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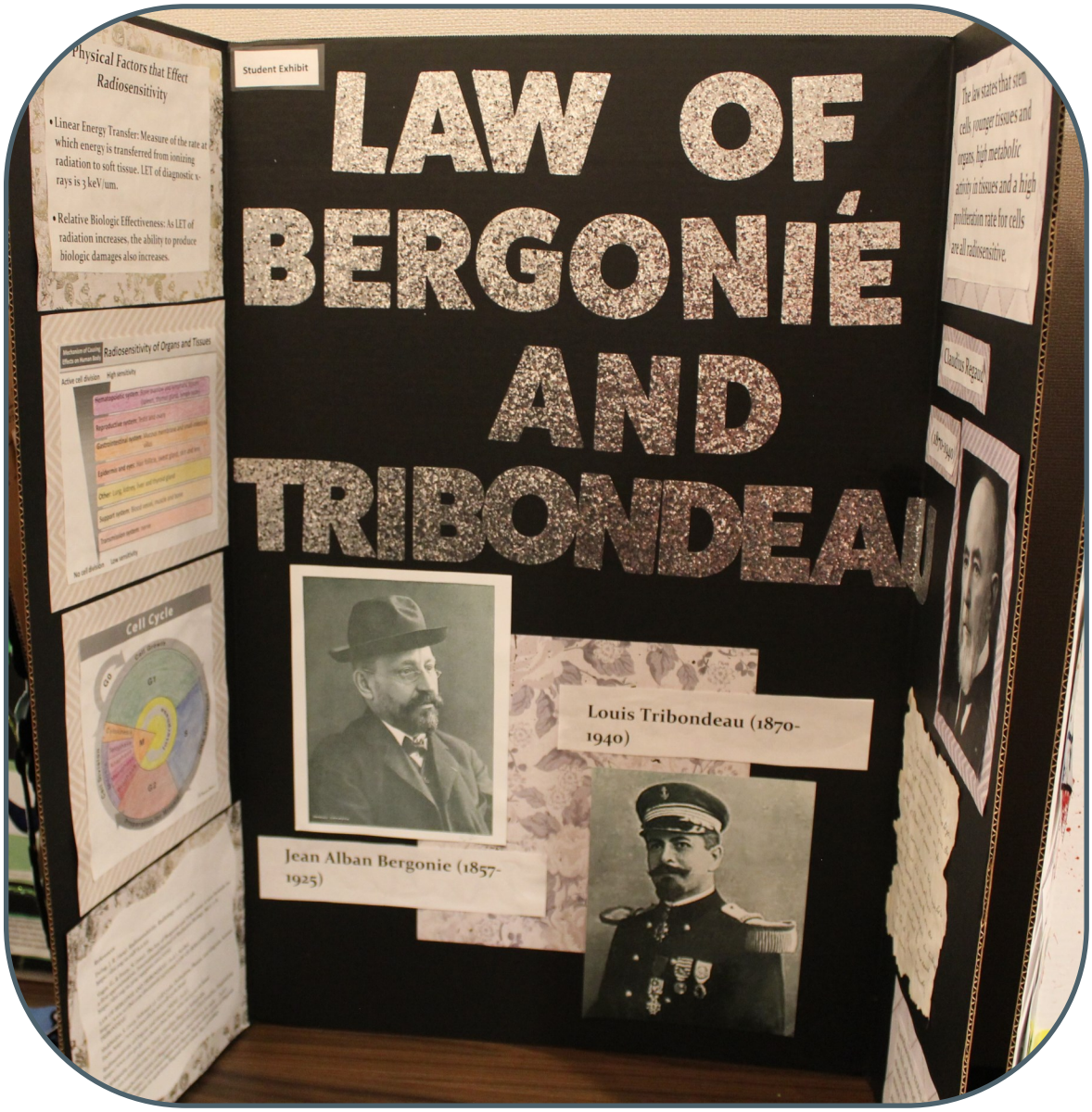

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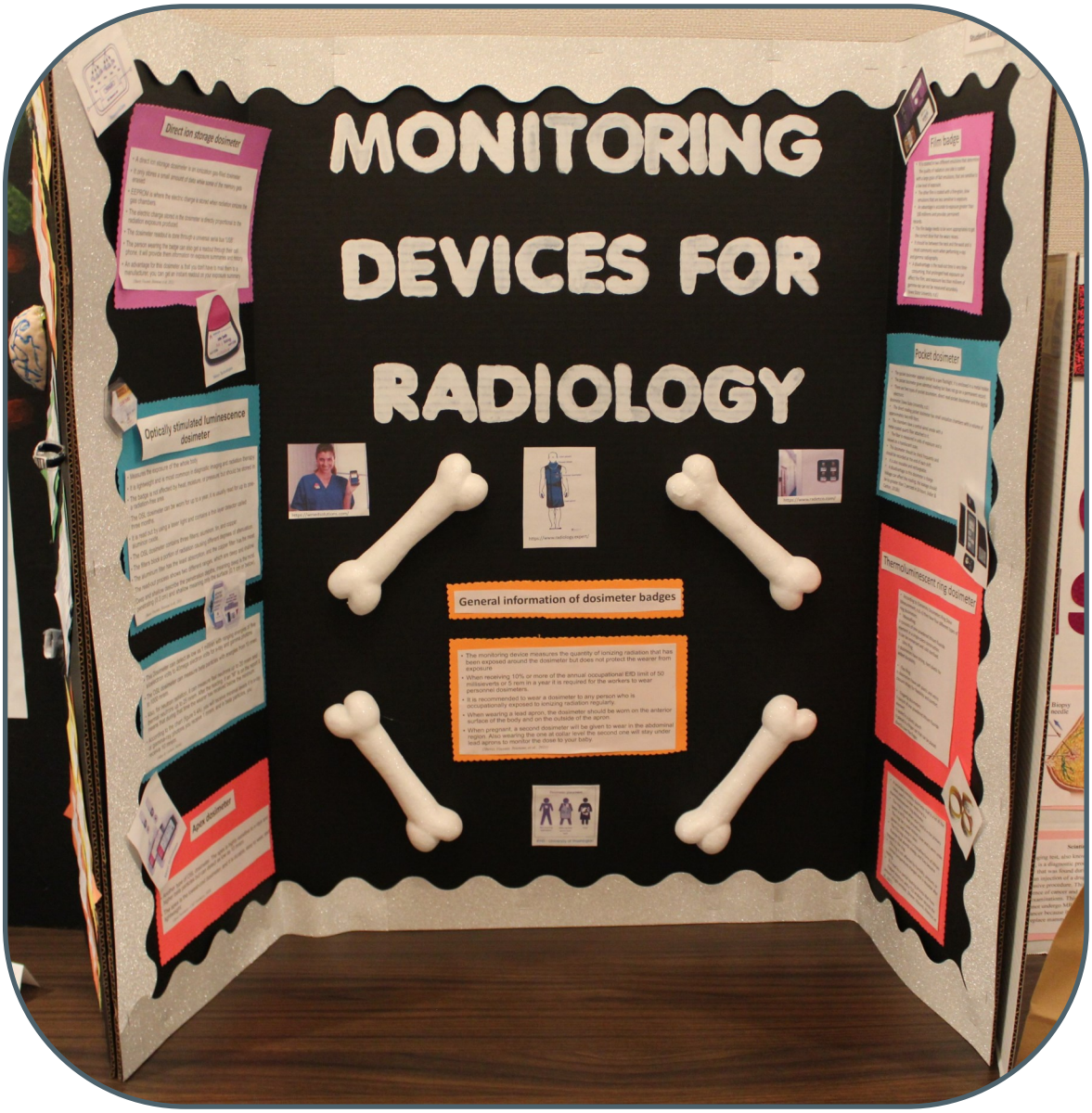

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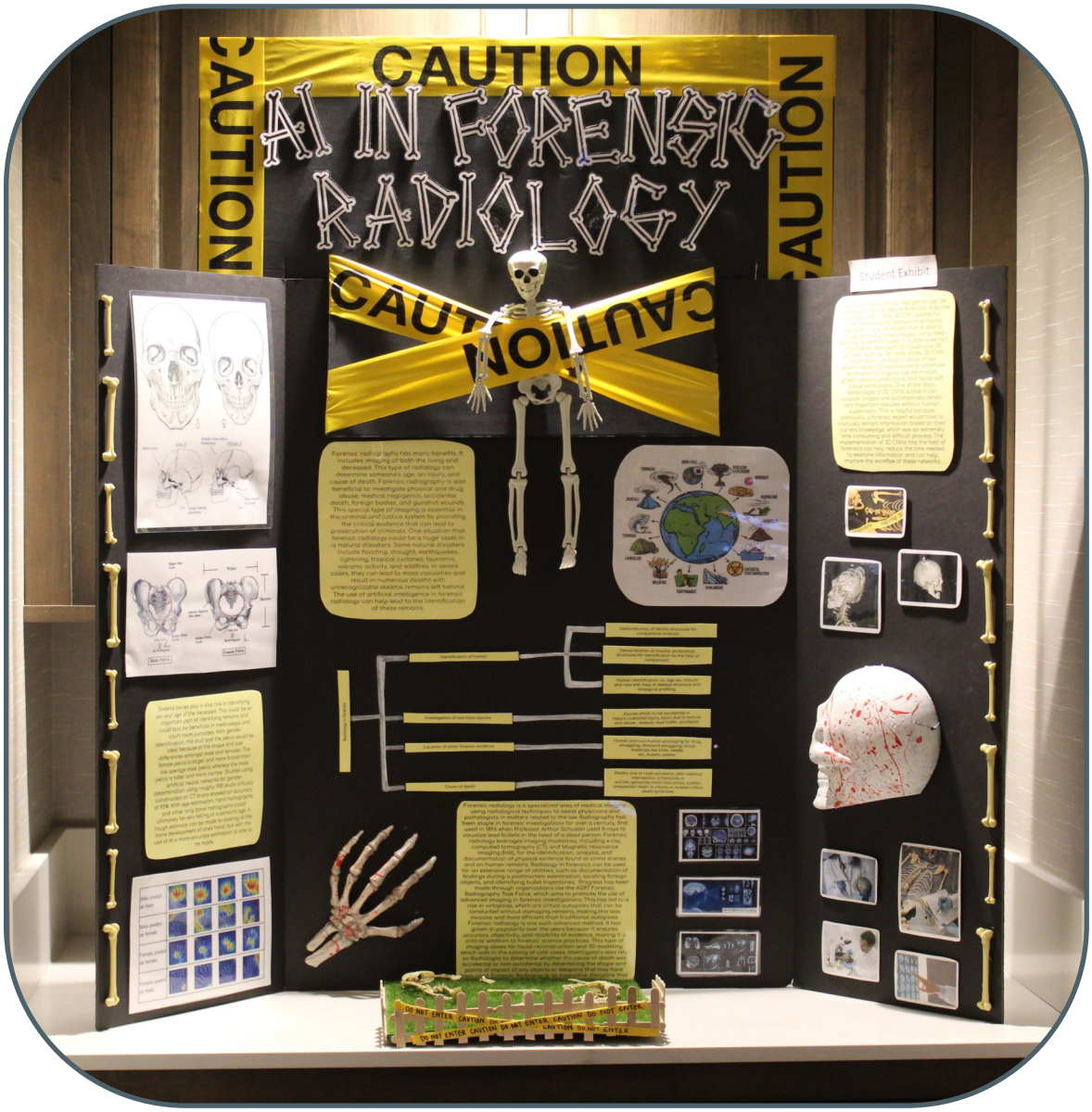

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Student Exhibits

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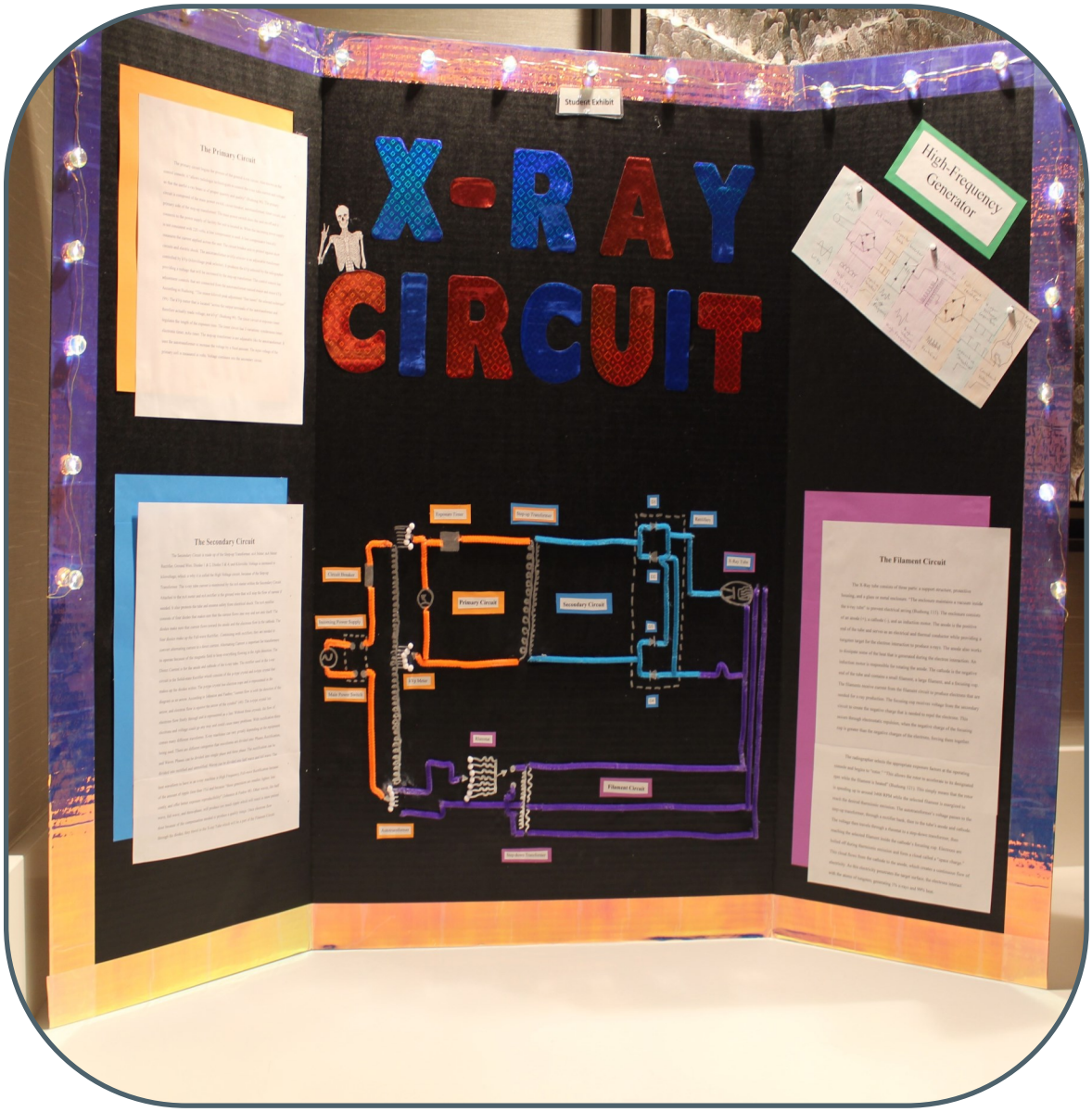
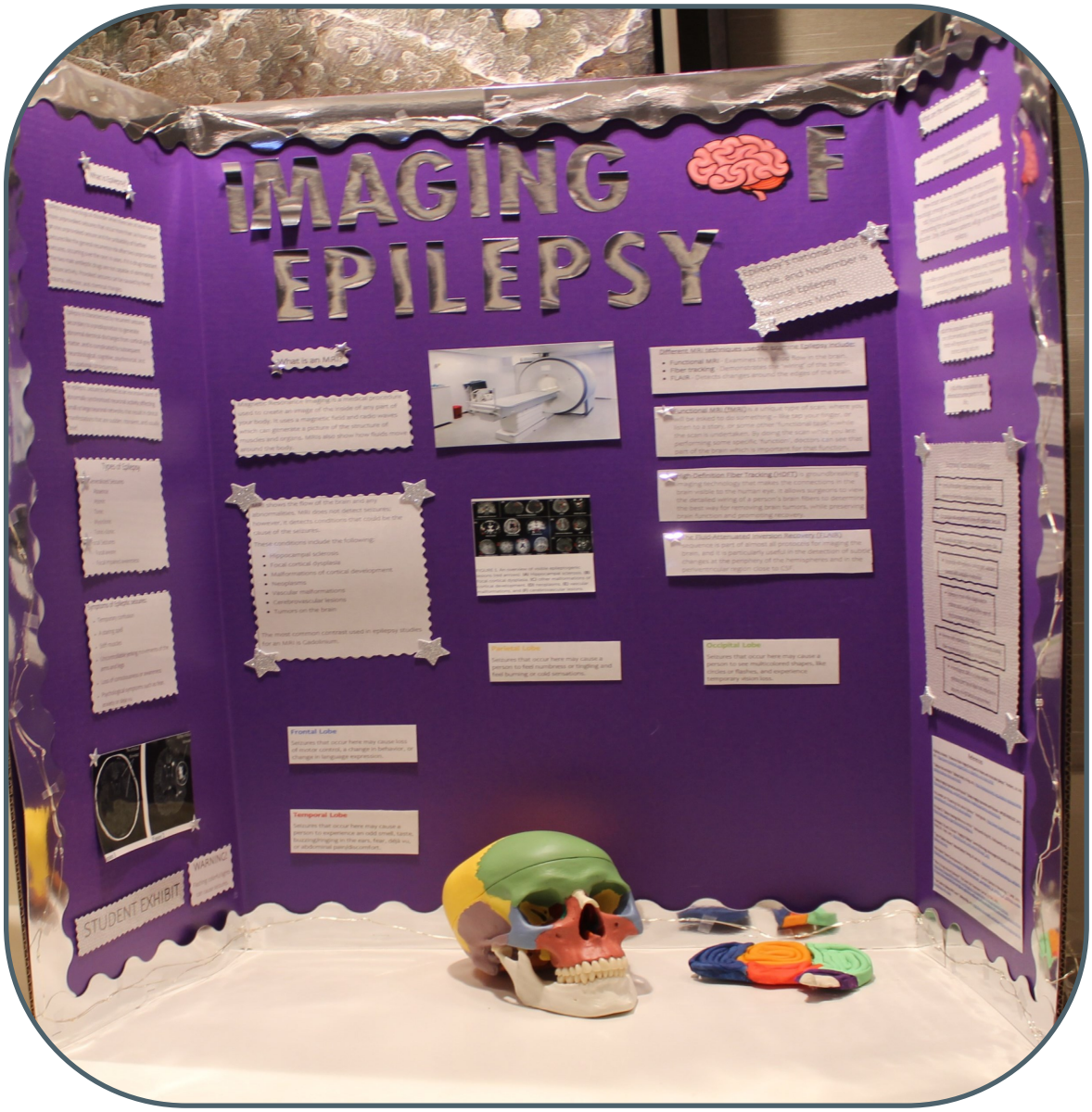


Student Exhibits



Out and About

Student Prep Bowl

1st Place

Pearl River Community College

Skylar Chaney, Payton McKerchie, Aaron Lizana, Katelyn McCain, Kailee Spiers

Student Prep Bowl

2nd Place

Jones County Junior College

Abby Parker, Zach Rivers, Madison Foxworth, Heather Puckett, Natalie Lillie

Student Prep Bowl

3rd Place

University of Mississippi Medical Center

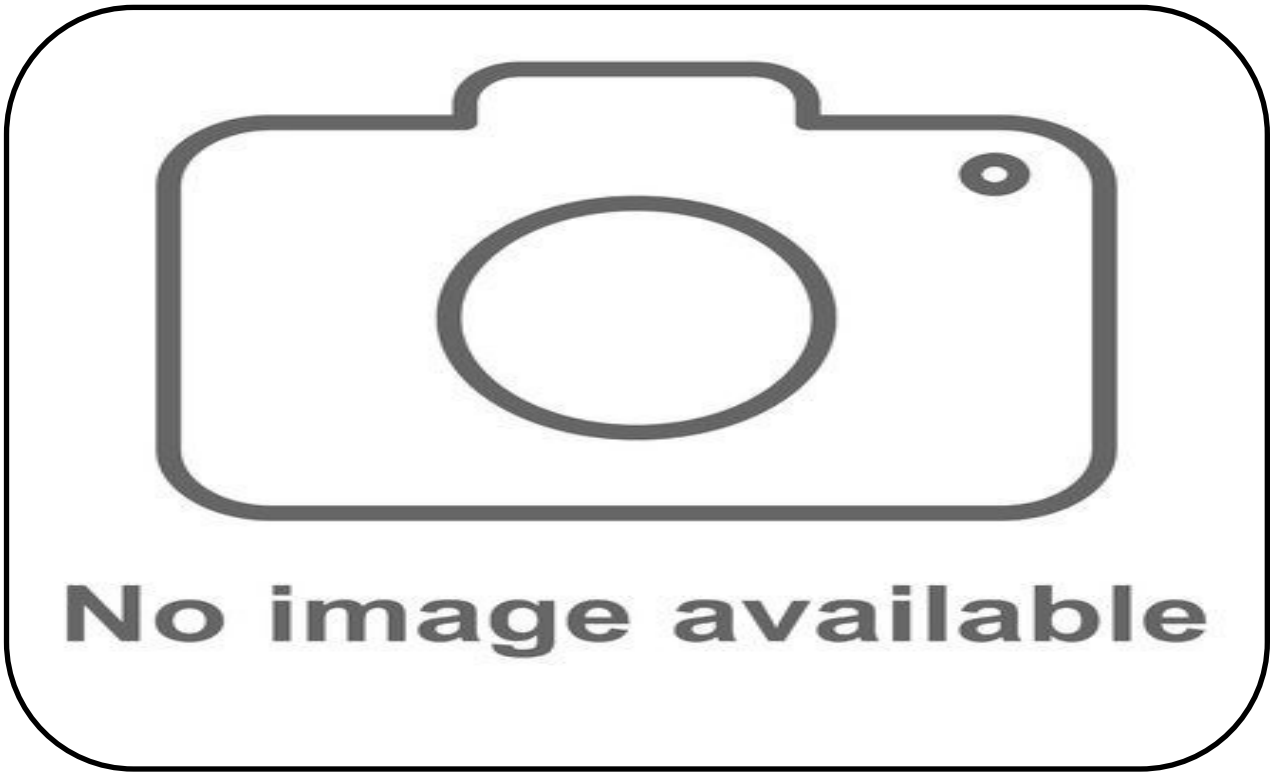
Chris Dyess, Lakin Hamm, Paige Johnson, Mallory Irby, Marquis Moore

Student Prep Bowl

Copiah Lincoln Community College

Gracie Smith, Abbigail Brown, Mason Clanton, Rayelle Nations, Hannah Boyd

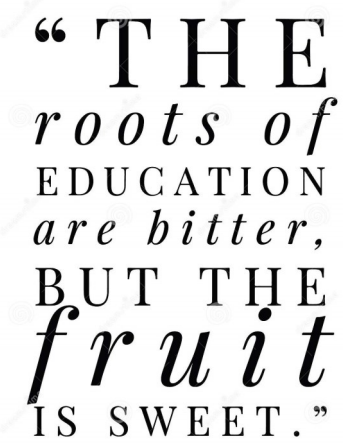
Student Prep Bowl



Mississippi Delta Community College

MSRT Scholarship Recipients

Each of these students have demonstrated outstanding academic and clinical performance throughout their education. The MSRT Board of Directors salutes them and wishes them well in their future endeavors.

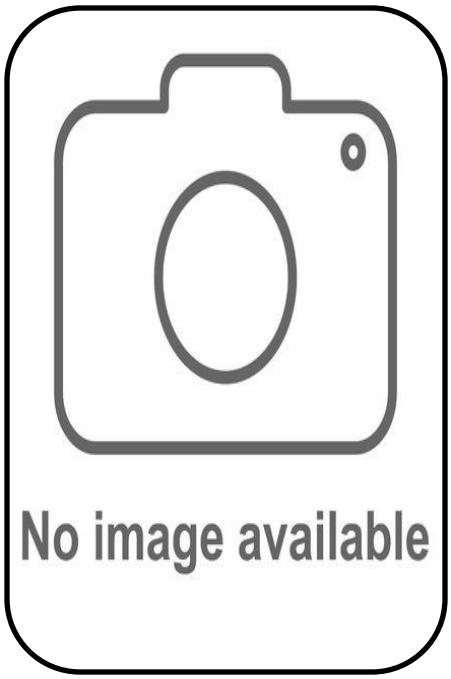


Congratulations

Abbigail Brown
Co-Lin

Abigail H. Burnside
Hinds

Madison Foxworth
Jones



Kayla Gross
MS Delta

Kailee Spiers
Pearl River

Mallory Irby
UMMC

Awards and Recognition

Congratulations!

(Above) 1st Place Student Exhibit
"Let's Get Physical"
Paige Johnson and Mallory Irby

(Above) 2nd Place Student Exhibit
"Nuclear Medicine"
Natalie Broom and Elizabeth Boyd

(Left) 3rd Place Student Exhibit and People's Choice Award
"Murder on My Mind"
Karli Martin and Logan Hearn
(Not Pictured) Desiree Delaney and Maegan Warren

(Left) 1st Place Student Manuscript
"The Mystery Behind Alexander Litvinenko"
Fallon Stephens

(Right) 2nd Place Student Manuscript
"The Radium Girls"
Taylor Lay

(Left) 3rd Place Student Manuscript
"PET Imaging for Alzheimer's"
Madison Foxworth

(Above) Newly installed MSRT officers L-R:
President Jessica Reid, Vice President Zack Gray,
and Secretary Kelly Fenwick

(Left) Past President's Award
Jessica Reid

(Right) Technologist of the Year
Adrian Brewer

2024 Student Delegates

Megan Espinoza

Payton Mckerchie

Thank you to our wonderful vendors!

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UMMC
School of Health Related Professions

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MSRT


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Letter from the Editor

Hello everyone!

Thank you to everyone who came to Gulfport and helped make it another great conference. It's always fun to get together with other members and make memories at conference.

The MSRT is always looking for new members and volunteers. Something we hold tight to everyday is "there is power in numbers." Whatever it is you can do to help, supporting the MSRT and fighting for our profession is so important right now. Feel free to reach out to any of us on the Board of Directors (names are listed on our website) and we will help you find a way to get involved.

Location and details for 2024 conference will be coming soon. Students, be thinking about and preparing for the Student Prep Bowl that happens at conference. Not only is it a good way to study and be more prepared for registry, it's a fun time! Also, be thinking about the Manuscript and Exhibit Competition. If you have any questions about either of these, reach out to your instructors or anyone with the MSRT.

Watch our Facebook for any upcoming announcements or information.

Thank you all again for your hard work and for being members of the MSRT. See you in October!

Adrian Brewer, R.T.(R)