

# Science, engineering fair slated at WCTC

By Troy Laack  
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PEWAUKEE – Organizers are looking for ambitious high school students to show off their projects and compete in the Waukesha County Science and Engineering Fair slated for March 10 at the Waukesha County Technical College.

It is the first science fair will be held in Waukesha County in many years and it will focus on science, technology, engineering and math, said organizer Jim Jaeschke of Pewaukee, board treasurer for the Badger State Science and Engineering Fair and a retired electrical engineer from the Watertown-based Eaton Corp.

The fair is a wonderful opportunity for high school students who have dedicated interests in science, technology, engineering and math, said Kurt Braun, chairman of the board of directors for the Wisconsin Science Education Foundation.

“Our goal is to expose high school students to the scientific process and give them hands-on, project-driven work to solidify this training in the academics they get,” said Braun, who will be a judge at the fair. “And then be able to not only do the work, but then to present the work, display the work and compete against other students.”

The science fair model has been around for many years and is one more facet in the personalization of learning, said Bruce Connolly, one of the fair’s organizers and administrator with the Cooperative Educational Service Agencies No. 1 in Pewaukee.

“We see the science fair as one more venue for students to engage in their own learning,” Connolly said. “We think that one of the most important parts of learning, especially for the millennials, the next generation of learners, when kids take responsibility for their learning and are engaged in their learning, that learning tends to stay with them

longer and it’s more applicable to their future learning.

“Imagination is more important than knowledge,” as Einstein said,” Connolly added. “This allows students to be in motion, engaged with real challenges of their lives.”

The fair includes monetary awards and plaques for winners in each category as well as Best of Fair, Jaeschke said. The categories are behavioral social science, biology, chemistry and biochemistry, environmental science, engineering, math and computers, medicine and health, and physics.

“This is certainly in our society and the world competition that we’re going through,” Jaeschke said. “We need all the technical talent that we can get and science fairs are one way of doing that.”

Students can register for the science fair online at [www.wacsef.org](http://www.wacsef.org).

Since there is now a local competition, Waukesha County students who want to participate in the Badger State Science and Engineering Fair on March 24 at Marquette University in Milwaukee likely will have to compete in the Waukesha County Science and Engineering Fair first.

Students who participate in the state fair could go onto the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair in Pittsburgh May 13-18. Prize winners at that level have been awarded tens of thousands of dollars in cash and scholarships, Jaeschke said.

“They’re treated like rock stars at this thing that Intel puts on,” Braun said. “It’s absolutely incredible.”

Thirteen students from Wisconsin went to the international fair last year, Braun said.

The Waukesha County Science and Engineering Fair also is in need of corporate and business sponsors to keep the event going year after year, and to make it attractive to students, Braun said.

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