

Higgs prizewinners for physics announced



A former pupil of Boroughmuir High School was one of two prizewinners announced earlier today by First Minister Alex Salmond. Eighteen year old Lucy Willets-White and seventeen year old Peter Rhodes met First Minister in the Scottish Parliament after attending First Minister's Questions.

The Higgs Prize was established in recognition of the impact Nobel Physics Prize winner Professor Higgs' theoretical work has had on modern day particle physics. Its purpose is to reward and inspire Scotland's best young school physicists.

The award winners will visit the internationally renowned CERN research facility in Switzerland to take part in its summer school and a specially designed programme of events.

The inaugural Higgs Prize winners are:

- Lucy Willets-White, formerly of Boroughmuir High School in Edinburgh, now studying Physics at Imperial College, London. At the moment she intends to stay in physics, either in industry or research.
- Peter Rhodes from Crail, formerly of Madras College in St Andrews, is applying for further study starting September 2014. At the moment he is interested in a possible career in neurology and psychiatry.

The First Minister has also confirmed that £4 million funding will be provided to support Professor Higgs' legacy. This will include a £2 million contribution to the Higgs Centre at the University of Edinburgh, alongside an additional £2 million to support a new generation of young researchers in physics and

mathematics at universities across Scotland, through the Scottish Funding Council.

Announcing the Higgs Prize winners, the First Minister said:-
“Professor Higgs’ achievements are hugely inspiring for our young people and his commitment to encouraging our next generation of scientists is well-known. It’s very fitting that we mark his globally recognised work through the Higgs Prize.

“For any young scholar, let alone a budding physicist, a trip to CERN is a once in a lifetime experience. As Higgs Prize winners, Lucy and Peter, who I met today, will have the fantastic opportunity to take part in internationally acclaimed CERN seminars and lectures.

“Meeting the Scottish university researchers at CERN will demonstrate exactly what someone can achieve with a career in physics. Science, engineering and technology will be central to Scotland’s future success and economic wellbeing. That is why I am delighted announced £4 million funding for the sector as a suitable tribute to Professor Higgs’ legacy.

“Scottish science in all its forms is going from strength to strength, building on our proud history of scientific discovery – the achievements of Lister, Kelvin, Logie Baird, Higgs and many, many others whom every Scot knows of and is proud of.

“We also want to help the university in their drive to build on the achievements of Professor Higgs. That is why, through the Scottish Funding Council, we will provide £2 million to support the Higgs Centre at the University of Edinburgh, which will further enhance the university’s reputation for research in Scotland and around the globe. An additional £2 million for post-graduate opportunities in physics and mathematics will help give more young people the opportunity to take their study to the next level at Scottish universities.

“I’m delighted that, above all, Professor Higgs’ achievements

will continue to inspire future generations of Scots.”

Professor Higgs said:-“At my old school in Bristol, I was inspired by seeing the name of Paul Dirac on the Honours board. Dirac received the 1933 Nobel Prize in Physics for predicting anti-matter and, in particular, the positron. I know very well how exciting and amazing visits to CERN can be and I’m delighted to have my name associated with this prize. I hope it inspires young students today just as I was inspired by Dirac.”

CERN Director General Rolf Heuer said:

“CERN has a long tradition of organising visits and programmes for students and we are always very pleased to welcome brilliant young talents. We are particularly proud to welcome soon the two very first recipients of the Higgs Prize, Lucy and Peter, and look forward to their visit.”

The First Minister has interviewed Professor Higgs and you can watch that here:-

Photo courtesy of Scottish Government’s Flickr stream which you will find [here](#).