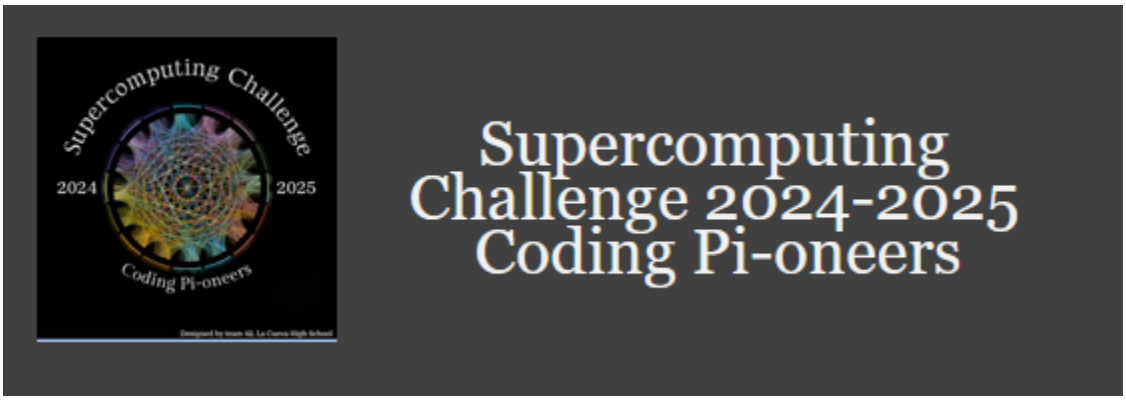
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Mexico Students Tackle Big Science in Academic Marathon of Innovation, Since 1990



[Santa Fe, NM, May 1, 2025] — The Supercomputing Challenge wrapped up another thrilling year, celebrating the brilliance, determination, and creativity of New Mexico's future innovators. Often described as an *academic marathon*, the Challenge pushes students to think critically, collaborate, code, and create, preparing them for tomorrow's real-world problems.

This year's top teams crossed the finish line with groundbreaking research and solutions:

First Place: *Tate D. Plohr*, Los Alamos High School
Project: *Constraining the Neutron Star Equation of State with Observation Data*

Second Place: *Andrew Morgan*, Los Alamos High School
Project: *Point Cloud Surface Reconstruction*

Third Place: *Hadwyn Link & Ximena Serna*, La Cueva High School
Project: *You Only Look Once: Machine Learning Solutions to Orbital Debris Detection and Classification*

"These students never cease to amaze me with the breadth and depth of their projects," said **David Kratzer**, Executive Director of the Supercomputing Challenge. "We are so proud to showcase the incredible talent and persistence they bring to every phase of the competition."

Throughout the Challenge, students work in teams to design and develop computational models based on their chosen topics—from astrophysics to AI. They learn beyond coding: they gain invaluable experience in communication, teamwork, research, and time management.

This year, **$5,400 in STEM scholarships** were awarded, along with prizes in categories such as technical writing, programming prowess, teamwork, and community impact.

Visit **supercomputingchallenge.org** to view final reports, winning projects, and event photos.

The Supercomputing Challenge is made possible by a coalition of dedicated partners including **Triad/LANL, New Mexico Consortium, Sandia National Labs, PNM, BigByte**, and New Mexico's leading colleges and universities.

Interested in next year's Challenge? Open to all New Mexico middle and high school students—including homeschoolers—this academic adventure welcomes new participants and partners. Contact us at **consult@supercomputingchallenge.org** to get involved or help expand our reach.
