

Good Morning Challenge Community – Teams, Teachers, Mentors, and all the many Friends of the Challenge who give this day its special flavor.

It is my honor and pleasure to introduce the new scholarship the Supercomputing Challenge is initiating in honor of our great friend Willard Smith. It seems a little odd to not be near Willard this morning and to hear his reflections about yesterday's Expo highlights. I'll bet he is grinning about the photo from Summer Teacher Institute in Alamogordo where a lizard relaxed on his foot at White Sands.

I met Willard in Atlanta in 2000 at the Morris Brown College. Joe Watts, from LANL and a go-getter for the Challenge took me with him to a MU-SPIN Conference. MU-SPIN is the Minority University Space Interdisciplinary Network and it is a NASA project targeting the preparation of the next generation of scientists and engineers, with a special focus on minority youth.

Willard took a shine to what he learned from Joe and me at Morris Brown about the Challenge and as they say, the rest is history. Willard who is now an Emeritus Professor at Tennessee State University has written proposals for many NASA projects and happily our Summer Teacher Institute has been the awardee of two generously funded grants. In addition to funding and opportunities to participate in all the NASA adventures that are open to secondary students, Willard has connected us with scientists doing interesting and important work.

Willard Smith has served on our Board of Directors. He has come faithfully to our Summer Teacher Institutes and Kickoffs and Awards Day. Meet the Scientist is one of his very strong suits. He is a longtime Scholarship Judge.

Willard likes us a lot and we love him. He will always have a special place in our history and our hearts. We are so very pleased that the Challenge is announcing the Willard Smith Annual Scholarship this morning. This year the Scholarship is for \$2000. The Challenge Board plans to nourish this scholarship so that each year it will be available for a promising future scientist who has been a member of the Challenge Community.

Thank you for all you have brought us, Willard: your friendship, your leadership, and your guidance. You make us smile, too: we gasped last year but then laughed out loud when you told us that being with us was the most fun you have with all your clothes on.

Betsy