



# Moody's Mega Math Challenge 2009

[M3Challenge.siam.org](http://M3Challenge.siam.org)

## Education professionals are enthusiastic!

"Moody's Mega Math Challenge was a great experience for the teachers as well as the students. ...As teachers in the math department, we looked at what was expected of the students, along with past questions, and we're now working on incorporating more similar-level questioning into our curriculum. It was a great experience for everyone involved."

**Taryn DiSorbo, Teacher-Coach, Staples High School, Westport, Connecticut**  
2008 M<sup>3</sup> Challenge Honorable Mention Team Prize

"The Challenge is the perfect competition for our students to utilize their proficiency in math, statistics, and computer science. ...High school students spend so much time solving the problems in their textbooks that they don't often see a real-world problem that doesn't necessarily have one precise or correct answer. They learn that sometimes the best solution is derived from mathematical and statistical analysis."

**Jessy Friedman, Teacher-Coach, Manalapan High School, Manalapan, New Jersey**  
2008 M<sup>3</sup> Challenge First Runner Up (Magna Cum Laude Team Prize)

"The M<sup>3</sup> Challenge is a fabulous competition and opportunity to make math come alive for the students at my school. Not only did [our] team have a great experience, but in preparing their presentation in front of other students, they were able to show practical applications to the mathematics we study in the classroom. I hope you will continue and expand your program; every student can benefit from the experience and exposure."

**David Gelb, Teacher-Coach, Hunterdon Central Regional High School, Flemington, New Jersey**  
2008 M<sup>3</sup> Challenge Fifth Place (Exemplary Team Prize)

"Moody's Mega Math Challenge is an excellent venue for students to apply critical thinking skills to real-life problems that have immediate relevancy. The totally open-ended nature of the problem means the students must perform research to fully understand and define the problem and identify the important parameters and learn to deal with uncertainty. The overwhelming size of the problem means the students must work as an integrated team to prioritize their tasks and delegate responsibilities so they can complete, document, and write up their tasks in a comprehensive report within a very strict deadline. The Challenge gives students the opportunity to show off what they have learned and mastered, and provides a reason and rationale to further their education."

**Richard Eng, Teacher-Coach, High Technology High School, Lincroft, New Jersey**  
2008 M<sup>3</sup> Challenge Champions (Summa Cum Laude Team Prize)

"...This was the first time Holmdel High School participated in the M<sup>3</sup> Challenge, but already my students are asking about the next one! The idea of translating what they learn in the classroom to real-world problems gets these very talented young men and women very excited..."

**Josephine Blaha, Teacher-Coach, Holmdel High School, Holmdel, New Jersey**  
2008 M<sup>3</sup> Challenge Fourth Place (Meritorious Team Prize)

## Student testimonials:

"[The Challenge] gave us a taste of what life in the real world is like: an actual real deadline and something that we weren't given any steps to follow to find the answer; we had to start from scratch and find it for ourselves. It was entertaining since we got to work with the team, develop teamwork...It was a fun experience."

**Kevin Tien**  
Manalapan High School, Manalapan, NJ  
2008 First Runner Up: \$15,000

"I was really impressed with the competition; I've been to many competitions and this one was the most professionally run...it was really well done. The best thing was when we finished...I felt like I did something great. When you get this big paper you feel like 'Wow we did this in 14 hours, less than a day.' It was really an accomplishment."

**Tom Jackson**  
High Technology High School, Lincroft, NJ  
2008 Champions: \$20,000

"I guess what I liked best was that instead of coming out in the end with a score, you had this 20-page paper. Then we could actually look back and see how much we accomplished, which is way more gratifying than just getting a score."

**Cameron Musco**  
The Wheeler School, Providence, RI  
2008 Sixth Place: \$2,500

"Don't spend the entire 14 hours working on [the problem]; it's good to have a half hour break or something. I think that in business the same idea could be applied: maybe once a month they could put people in a room for a couple of hours and make them solve problems as opposed to giving them long deadlines; it helps people work together."

**Nevin Raj**  
Hunterdon Central Regional High School, Flemington, NJ  
2008 Fifth Place: \$5,000

