

N.M. science teams riding high after competition

By [Hailey Heinz / Journal Staff Writer](#) on Tue, Jul 5, 2011

How to take New Mexico's gusting winds and transform them into much-needed energy? A group of New Mexico teens knows the basic science of wind energy, and has shown off their chops on the national stage.

A team from Socorro High School ranked third last month in a national math, engineering and science competition. Their task was to harness wind energy and use it to complete several tasks. In addition to creating their windmill, the students also had to write a paper and create a display about their work.

A team from Albuquerque's Taylor Middle School also traveled to the national competition in Seattle, where they represented New Mexico after winning the state middle school competition. The Taylor team placed seventh.

The teams are both participants in MESA, which stands for Math, Engineering and Science Achievement. MESA is a competition between eight states, which hold state contests and send winners to compete nationally.

New Mexico MESA director Toney Begay said he is especially impressed with the work of this year's teams, who had less preparation time than their competitors. Begay said New Mexico's MESA chapter was short on funds, and was not planning to send the state champs to the national competition. But when savings became available, he told the kids to get their windmill-building on.

"Our teams were very successful, given that they didn't get started until April," Begay said. "Other teams had eight months to prepare."

The students on the Socorro team were Kyle Benalil, Timothy Abeyta, Sarah McLain and Jeremiah Drake.

The Taylor students were Patrick Busey, Nicholas Atale, Ian Hauserfleck and Benjamin Liptak