

Special Awards 2025

Special Awards are awards that are judged according to guidelines from the donors. 17 local and national organizations, businesses, and universities donated over \$5,000 in cash, memberships and materials to recognize projects that align with each award sponsor's mission and goals.

Society of Women Engineers Omaha

The Society of Women Engineers is the world's largest advocate and catalyst for change for women in engineering and technology.

The local chapter of SWE has selected five Outstanding Female Engineers with a prize of a gift card

There are three 2nd Place projects

Second place, Junior Division - **1204 Kinlee Huber**

Second place, Junior Division - **1215 Miri Peterson**

Second place, Senior Division - **2103 Mariah Sanchez**

First place, Junior Division - **1103 Jozlyn Gordon**

First place, Senior Division - **2102 Millie Jackson**

American Chemical Society-Omaha Chapter

ACS is one of the world's largest scientific societies and the premier home of chemistry professionals.

The local chapter has selected four projects for the Excellence in Chemistry, including a cash prize and beaker mug.

1st place, Junior Division - \$50 dollars and a mug - **1133 Mathias Petersen**

2nd place, Junior Division - \$25 dollars and a mug - **1103 Jozlyn Gordon**

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Honorable mention - ACS mug - **1071, 1123 and 1216** Anna Dickerson, Mandy Lao, Tifferi Phillips

1st place, Senior Division - \$50 dollars and a mug - **2085** Anushka Sajja

2nd place, Senior Division - \$25 dollars and a mug - **2083** Pranavi Prakash

Honorable mention - ACS mug - **2082, 2071**

Emily Alison
Shradha Mamilla

Air and Space Forces Association Award

The mission of AFA is to advocate and promote air and space power to favorably shape policy and resourcing decisions to guarantee the strongest air and space forces in the world. The local AFA Ak-Sar-Ben chapter has selected one junior and one senior project that align with this mission.

Junior -

1153	Filipe Lopez
1147	Emma Park

Senior -

2104	Tristan Shiffermiller
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Omaha North High School

As it celebrates its centennial this year, Omaha North High continues to prepare students for future careers in STEM fields.

As judged by North staff and students, two middle school projects will receive a North High Swag bag Award for Engineering & Design

1182	Jennifer Khu
1261	River Bennett

Mastery Logistics

Mastery empowers select shippers, carriers and logistics companies to thrive in complexity. The Computer Science/Logistics Award is a \$50 cash prize for three projects

1291	Emery Dacus
1293	Austin Ordway
2092	Moo Law La Soe

Office of Naval Research

Since 1946, thousands of engineers, physicists, mathematicians, oceanographers, meteorologists, inventors, physicians and other scientists have come to the Office of Naval Research with daring ideas in investigation, invention, discovery, and world-changing advances. ONR has supported the most outstanding among them, including student science fair participants.

Junior Division Naval Science Award receives a medal and certificate

1161	Grant Anderson
1163	Daniel Hall
1176	Ryleigh Mann
1274	Niththil Palsamy

Senior Division Naval Science Award receives a Medal, certificate, and gift card

2063	Rachel Ma
2082	Shradha Mamilla
2094	Athreya Reddy

Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium

Named the #1 Zoo by USA Today again this month, Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium is a long time advocate for MSEF with 2025 being the 12th year hosting the fair. To encourage student research, the zoo awards a Household Membership

Junior - 1016 Isabelle Stieren

Senior - 2015 Leah Melancon

UNO STEM TRAIL Center

The STEM TRAIL Center at University of Nebraska at Omaha supports innovation and literacy at all levels for the betterment of the metro area. Tonight, 10 middle school students will receive a kit to continue STEM related exploration.

1104	Graci Henderson	
1144	Bartolo Grant	Justice Wedner
1151	Mariyah Broadway	
1178	Easton Vandervort	
1193	Jackson Stockdale	
1244	Evie Kassmeier	Mara Brugman
1266	Akshara Manchikalapudi	
1275	Andrew Sorros	

Lauritzen Gardens

A long-time advocate of MSEF, Lauritzen Gardens is a living museum of unique four-season plant displays, maintained to the highest standards consistent with environmental stewardship. As an award for outstanding plant and environmental research, Lauritzen Gardens awards a family membership to two projects

1083	Maria G. Mozzoni
2102	Millie Jackson

South Dakota Mines

South Dakota Mines is continually ranked among the best engineering undergraduate schools in the country for return on investment.

The Outstanding Sophomore project receives a certificate to attend Summer Camp in Rapid City, South Dakota

2094	Athreya Reddy
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Midwest Laboratories

An Omaha based business that analyzes food, soil, plants, animal food, and fertilizer and delivers science through innovation, teamwork and dynamic service. Cash prizes are awarded to innovative projects reflecting Midwest Laboratories' areas of focus.

Junior division recipients receive a \$150 cash prize

1193	Jackson Stockdale
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1284	Jordyn Rogers
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1273	Finnegan O'Brien
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Senior division recipients receive a \$300 cash prize

2125	Evalina Sain
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Innovation Scouts

Invention Scouts are an extension of Scouting America and hope to provide a structured environment to encourage young minds' natural curiosity and build interest in STEM-related academics and careers. They service over 102 counties within the council but also serve the local community through in-school and after-school curriculums as well as public events, school open houses, and also any other interesting events in the area. They have been around since 2021 and hope to serve the community for years to come.

The innovate award goes to a unique project where students think outside the box to answer a question or solve a problem that most would not have thought of.

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1033	Caroline Doyle
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The Future Innovator Award goes to a project that demonstrates that they have the mind of a future entrepreneur.

1024	Isaiah Hernandez
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The Bang! Award goes to a project that wows the judges! The concept and execution are simply amazing.

1291	Emery Dacus
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Baker Creek Seeds

Baker Creek Seeds Passions in Botanical Exploration Award

Presented to a science fair project that embodies the spirit of **passion, curiosity, and dedication** to growing plants and expanding botanical knowledge. This award recognizes a student whose work aligns with **Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds' mission**—celebrating plant diversity and sustainability.

1272	Alara Lytle
1283	Hailey Orbin

Omaha Astronomical Society

The only thing better than pursuing the hobby of astronomy, is sharing your interest with other like minded enthusiasts. The Omaha Astronomical Society organization has been in existence for over 76 years. The OAS holds monthly Star Parties at Lake Zorinsky as part of the Astronomy in the Parks, weather permitting of course and has a rural observing site called Astro Park near Weeping Water, Nebraska that is open to members.

\$100 cash prize and a one year membership to the Society

1254	Cameron Mellon
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Green Omaha Coalition

Since 2006, Green Omaha Coalition has carried out their mission to inform and connect people across the Omaha metro to strengthen the local green community.

Junior 3rd place - \$50

1275	Andrew Sorrows
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Junior 2nd place - \$100

1146	Jayceon Lee
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Senior - 2nd place - \$100

2102	Millie Jackson
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Junior 1st place - \$200

1147	Emma Park
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Senior - 1st place - \$200

2138	Aliyah Popp
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Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum

The Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum is a place for aspiring innovators, builders, explorers and anyone in between to immerse themselves in the discovery of flight and space exploration. For the past 25 years they have been on a mission to provide innovative and interactive experiences inspired by the past to imagine the limitless possibilities for the future. From the larger - than -life exhibits and aircraft collections to exciting hands-on STEMp camp experiences they provide visitors with a journey into the sky and beyond.

As an award for outstanding research, the SAC museum awards a family membership to two projects.

1147	Emma Park
1251	Calix Essien

Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association Greater Omaha Chapter

The Greater Omaha Chapter of AFCEA is a forum for Government, industry, and academia to share ideas, explore tech advancements, and expand IT perspectives. Their chapter is dedicated to developing tomorrow's professionals through scholarships, awards, and fostering STEM in schools.

The Greater Omaha Chapter has provided awards at MSEF since the 80's. Retired Naval CAPTAIN Thomas Merkle, Chapter President, is here today representing the chapter in their role as the Honorary Chair of MSEF. The projects selected for a Greater Omaha Chapter award are invited to set up their displays and converse with professionals at a future chapter luncheon where they will also receive a generous cash prize.

1123	Mandy Lao
1151	Mariyah Broadway
1163	Daniel Hall
1183	Jericho Pierce
1185	Logan Ridder
1254	Cameron Mellon
1293	Austin Ordway
1294	Ace Steinke
2094	Athreya Reddy