




## BEST IN SHOW

PRESENTED BY  RTX

**Daniel P.**  
*Bioremediation  
Implications: A Novel  
Simulation of  
Perchlorate Docking  
with pcrABCD Proteins*  
UNITED STATES



Image courtesy of The Henry Ford Invention Convention Worldwide.

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 11, 2024

### University of South Florida's Invention Convention Florida Celebrates Historic Win by Young Florida Inventor

**TAMPA, FL** – The University of South Florida's Invention Convention Florida state program in partnership with USF Research & Innovation and the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame proudly announce that Daniel Park, an 11th-grade student from Hillsborough County, Florida, has made history as the first Floridian to win the Best in Show award at the prestigious Invention Convention Americas 2024 competition, which featured over 130 finalists, selected from more than 178,000 participants, who were judged by a panel of 30 international experts.

This remarkable achievement marks the first time a young inventor from Florida has secured the top honor at one of ICW's international competitions, either at the America or Worldwide level. Florida's inventors have consistently excelled at the U.S. Nationals, with over 25 inventors from the state earning awards since 2020. However, none have previously won the Most Innovative Awards at the national level.

"The Invention Convention Americas competition brings together incredible youth inventors from Mexico and the United States and gives them the opportunity to meet, compete, and learn from each other. We're continuously impressed by the inventions these young inventors create and are inspired by the potential of students like Daniel, who are identifying real-world problems and designing solutions that will change our world for the better," said Carolyn Ward, the Senior Director for Learning Business Development & Partnerships at the Henry Ford.

The University of South Florida in partnership with USF Research & Innovation and the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame became the official state affiliate of the Invention Convention Worldwide in November 2023.

Dr. Sylvia Thomas, Vice President for USF Research & Innovation, applauded the young inventor's efforts, "Daniel Park's groundbreaking achievement at the Invention Convention Americas 2024 is a testament to the innovative spirit that we foster at the University of South Florida. His success not only brings pride to our university and state but also underscores the importance of nurturing young inventors who are poised to drive future advancements. We are committed to supporting students like Daniel as they develop solutions that have the potential to change the world."

Daniel was recognized for his groundbreaking invention, "Bioremediation Implications: A Novel Simulation of Perchlorate Docking with pcrABCD Proteins." Daniel's invention, which addresses critical environmental pollutants and their health impacts on the human body, also secured first place in the Grade 9-11 category at the Invention Convention Americas.

Daniel's curiosity about the world around him and his desire to solve pressing environmental problems inspired him to create this award-winning innovation. Reflecting on his journey, Daniel said, "Inventing has changed my life by making me a more perseverant and determined person, as well as a more confident and effective communicator. Throughout the entire design process, we faced various obstacles, but we kept going until we found something that worked." He was also inspired by the inventions of his peers, saying, "I have met many incredible individuals who have created very cool inventions to solve a variety of issues. This has motivated me to continue inventing and hopefully find solutions to even more problems."

Along with Daniel, two other students from Florida secured top prizes in their age categories at Invention Convention Americas 2024: Dhira Sharma received 2<sup>nd</sup> place among Grades 6-8 for her SafeSteer™ invention and Sonia Patel received 1<sup>st</sup> Place among Grades 12+ for her Corneal Applanation Suturing Model (C.A.S.M.).

Daniel's father, Dr. Sanghoon Park, an Associate Professor and Learning Design and Technology Program Coordinator at the University of South Florida's College of Education, emphasized the importance of community support in his son's success: "We firmly believe that Daniel's achievements are the result of the strong support and guidance from all of you as part of a learning community. Through the combined efforts of the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame, Invention Convention Florida, the HCPS STEM department, and his teachers and mentors, Daniel was able to bring his ideas to life."

The Invention Convention Florida at the University of South Florida will take place on April 11-12, 2025, in Tampa, Fla.

### **About University of South Florida**

The University of South Florida, a high-impact research university dedicated to student success and committed to community engagement, generates an annual economic impact of more than \$6 billion. With campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg and Sarasota-Manatee, USF serves approximately 50,000 students who represent nearly 150 different countries. U.S. News & World Report has ranked USF as one of the nation's top 50 public universities for five consecutive years, and this year USF earned its highest ranking ever among all universities public or private. In 2023, USF became the first public university in Florida in nearly 40 years to be invited to join the Association of American Universities, a prestigious group of the leading universities in the United States and Canada. Through hundreds of millions of dollars in research

activity each year and as one of the top universities in the world for securing new patents, USF is a leader in solving global problems and improving lives. USF is a member of the American Athletic Conference. Learn more at [www.usf.edu](http://www.usf.edu).

### **About the Florida Inventors Hall of Fame**

The Florida Inventors Hall of Fame (FIHF) recognizes and celebrates Florida inventors whose achievements have advanced the quality of life for Floridians, the state and the nation. Founded in 2013 and housed in the USF Research Park in Tampa, FIHF was recognized by the Florida Senate Resolution 1756 in April of 2014. FIHF catalyzes the cycle of discovery and innovation across the state of Florida by recognizing pioneering inventors, empowering future problem-solvers and change-makers, and propelling the American legacy of innovation through transformative experiences and meaningful storytelling. Learn more at: [www.floridainvents.org](http://www.floridainvents.org)

### **About The Henry Ford**

Located in Dearborn, Michigan, The Henry Ford, a globally recognized destination, fosters inspiration and learning from hands-on encounters with artifacts that represent the most comprehensive collection anywhere focusing on innovation, ingenuity and resourcefulness in America. Its unique venues include Henry Ford Museum of American Innovation, Greenfield Village, Ford Rouge Factory Tour, Benson Ford Research Center and Henry Ford Academy, a public charter high school. Together with its online presence at [thf.org](http://thf.org), its national television series The Henry Ford's Innovation Nation and Invention Convention Worldwide, the growing affiliation of organizations fostering innovation, invention and entrepreneurship in K-12 students, The Henry Ford inspires individuals to unlock their potential and help shape a better future. Learn more at: [www.thehenryford.org](http://www.thehenryford.org).

### **Media Contacts:**

**Jamie Spurrier**

**Florida Inventors Hall of Fame at USF**

[jspurrie@usf.edu](mailto:jspurrie@usf.edu)

**Lauren Parker**

**Florida Inventors Hall of Fame at USF**

[mcperson1@usf.edu](mailto:mcperson1@usf.edu)