

## University Students in Challenge to Solve Energy Crisis

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A team of students from the University of Birmingham's College of Engineering and Physical Sciences has come joint first in the 2010 RWE npower energy challenge.

The team, from the Schools of Chemical and Civil Engineering, took part in an annual competition where students are asked to address questions currently faced by the power industry. This year's challenge was 'How should a power generation and supply company respond to climate change?' In their presentations the teams also had to consider affordability, sustainability and customer loyalty and retention.

The winning students came up with an idea involving hydroelectric power generation, controlled flooding and nuclear power to combat and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Their presentation featured a model of a river bend to demonstrate the controlled flooding concept.

Dr Lawrence Coates, sponsoring lecturer of the winning team, IEDT, from the University's School of Civil Engineering, said, 'The npower challenge is a once in a lifetime opportunity to present to the company's CEO and Board with a solution to one of today's important challenges. It leads students to engage in pure enquiry-based learning. Our students worked flat out on the project for a month becoming experts on all things energy. As they only had 8 minutes to put their case across they also developed the essential and transferable skills of being clear, concise and to the point.'

A second Birmingham team of students, from the Schools of Civil, Mechanical and Materials and Metallurgy sponsored by Dr Andy Williams, took 3rd place with plans to use biomass and organic waste to supplement natural gas and to create a website where the consumer could identify cost savings by swapping to more energy-efficient appliances in the home.

The Birmingham students were up against teams from Germany, Imperial College, City, Bristol and Cambridge universities. The winners won £1250 each and £5000 was won by the School of Civil Engineering, which will be used to endow a student prize relating to energy engineering learning.

The teams will present their ideas to a select audience at the House of Commons on 23rd June and will receive a certificate from the Prime Minister.

Ends

Notes to Editors

The team members in the winning team: Chris Hayhurst, Adam Flory, Alex Heward, Jacqui Tildesley.

For further media information

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