

MAKING A BIG BANG

With 22,545 people in attendance including over 15,000 children and young people and over 4,000 teachers, parents and guardians, The Big Bang UK Young Scientists' and Engineers' Fair 2010 was the biggest single celebration of science and engineering for young people in the UK and made a lasting impression on all who visited.



UK Young Engineer of the Year Shawn Brown

With cross-party support from a wide range of MPs, the three-day science and engineering spectacular enjoyed an excellent turnout in Manchester this March and will be followed up by twelve regional Big Bangs later this Summer. With the help and support of MPs and communities across the UK, the regional fairs will inspire and engage a whole host of new participants not only to attend the national Fair but also to consider taking part in the National Science & Engineering Competition.

Involving over 110 organisations from across the private, public and voluntary sectors, and reaching out to schools and students across the

Cumbria commented, "There was something for everyone and we came away wishing we had more time to spend there".

For all the fun of The Fair however, The Big Bang was an event with a serious aim; to promote STEM careers to young people and address related skills gaps across the UK. This overarching aim was pursued throughout the three-day event not least via The Big Bang careers awareness programme developed by EngineeringUK and The Science Council in partnership with the DCSF. The first integrated careers programme of its kind, this involved careers speed networking events, an interactive careers quest, co-ordinated

careers resources, and a series of live panel debates involving National STEM Careers Co-ordinator Kate Bellingham; Juergen Maier, Head of Siemens Industry Sector UK; and Joanna Woolf, Chief Executive of Cogent. All were aimed at children, parents and teachers to provide study hints and tips, as well as concrete examples of how STEM careers are creative, useful and desirable.

Guests included HRH the Duke of Kent, Lord Mandelson First Secretary of State and Secretary of State for the Department of Business, Innovation & Skills, as well as Olympic Gold Medallist Amy Williams, Professor Jim Al-Khalili, Professor Marcus du Sautoy, the cast of Sky One's *Brainiac*, and all four of the BBC's *Bang Goes the Theory* presenters – one of whom arrived in Manchester in a sustainable, coffee-powered car.

In addition to the shows, celebrities and interactive activities, The Fair also featured National Science & Engineering Competition, led by The British Science Association, from which ten overall prize-winners were drawn as finalists. The ultimate titles went to UK Young

Engineer of the Year Shawn Brown for his solar-powered bamboo bike made from sustainable, reusable material and UK Young Scientist of the Year Thomas Hearing for his project mapping the eroding ammonite pavement of Monmouth Beach.

Sir Anthony Cleaver, Patron of The Big Bang, said:

"More than just a great day out, The Big Bang 2010 gave over 15,000 young people and equally importantly over 4,000 teachers and parents, the opportunity to explore many exciting opportunities in science and engineering. I would like to thank our many Parliamentary supporters as well as the hundred and ten organisations which came together to make this possible for ensuring the experience was so memorable and inspirational for everyone who visited."

For more information about The Big Bang 2011 as well as regional fairs across the UK visit www.thebigbangfair.co.uk.

For more information about the National Science and Engineering Competition visit www.nationalsciencecompetition.org



country, The Big Bang 2010 represented an unprecedented partnership of the UK's science and engineering communities, and demonstrated a real desire to come together to celebrate and raise the profile of young people's achievements in science and engineering. Staged in Manchester Central, this year's event attracted more than three times as many attendees as The Big Bang 2009. From welding with chocolate, mapping the human genome and exploring the hospital of the future, there was a real buzz in the air as children and young people discovered firsthand the wonders of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM). As Head teacher Annie Leonard from

