

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS  
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FOR RELEASE:

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NATIONAL SCIENCE YOUTH MONTH TERMED "ANSWER TO SPUTNIK"

Dr. Howard L. Bevis, the Chairman of President Eisenhower's Committee on Scientists and Engineers last night called for nationwide support of October as National Science Youth Month, which he described as "a major answer to the intellectual challenge symbolized in Russia's launching of Sputnik a year ago today."

He was joined in asking citizens and citizens' groups to promote science activities in the Nation's classrooms this month by top spokesmen of the Department of Defense, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Department of Labor, and the Office of Defense and Civilian Mobilization.

Dr. Bevis issued this statement: "On October 4, 1957, the world was startled with the news that Russia had sent a satellite into orbit. In the wake of that news, our need for more scientists and engineers became a national concern. In the year since, the American people have become aware that this Nation can no longer afford to delay pre-professional training of potential scientists or engineers until they reach college. Preparation of informed citizens of tomorrow, whether or not they ever become scientists or engineers, must begin in junior high school -- even senior high school may be too late.

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"National Science Youth Month is intended to turn the fresh, inquiring minds of our young people toward these professions by stimulating their interest in helping to press back the technological frontiers which bound our modern way of life. The Month deserves the support of every American, for it represents a major answer to the intellectual challenge symbolized in Russia's launching of Sputnik a year ago today."

Science Youth Month was launched earlier this week (Tuesday, Sept. 30) by President Eisenhower. The Month is sponsored by the President's Committee on Scientists and Engineers and 28 other national organizations, including Government agencies, educational, professional, business and civic groups. Observance of October as National Science Youth Month was begun three years ago. This is the second year it has been sponsored by the White House group.

Support of the Month was expressed yesterday by these top-ranking Administration officials:

Donald A. Quarles, Deputy Secretary of Defense: "In view of the increasing importance of scientific knowledge and technical proficiency in our national defense system, the Department of Defense welcomes the opportunity to support and participate in the program for National Science Youth Month.

"This joint effort of government agencies, professional societies and other major organizations will surely help to promote student interest in the sciences and give every thinking citizen increased awareness of the extent to which our way of life and our national security depend upon continuing progress in this field.

"The Department of Defense and the Armed Forces will cooperate as fully as possible in the various aspects of National Science Youth Month."

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Arthur S. Flemming, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare: "National Science Youth Month offers a challenge to citizens and citizens groups to mobilize the resources of schools and communities throughout the Nation in support of science education. It is also a time for all citizens to take stock of the scientific advances of today's world. A knowledge of science, combined with the ability to apply this knowledge in an intelligent manner to the great issues of our day, is becoming more and more a prerequisite of responsible citizenship."

James P. Mitchell, Secretary of Labor: "The Nation can no longer afford to delay pre-professional training of potential scientists or engineers until they reach the college level.

"Preparation must be made in the Junior High schools or in embryonic forms in the elementary grades...National Science Youth Month will turn the fresh and inquiring minds of our young people towards these professions by stimulating their interest in mechanical and scientific arts...We must be mindful however that a complete background in the humanities is essential to attain that balance which is the essence of a thoroughly educated personality."

Leo A. Hoegh, Director of the Office of Defense and Civilian Mobilization:

"Much of our strength in the non-military defense field is being determined today in America's classrooms. Our future defense will be manned, in very large degree, by men and women trained in science and technology. To meet our civil defense and defense mobilization needs, more and more of our talented young people should seek careers in science and engineering.

"One excellent way of stimulating their interest is National Science Youth Month, which is being observed during October in schools across the country. This month-long emphasis of science in the classroom merits the active support of every thinking citizen."

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The Month launches a continuing program of emphasizing science activities among millions of students in the Nation's public, private and parochial secondary schools throughout the academic year. Organization of science clubs and science fairs in all parts of the country will be stressed. A science youth organizations' working group appointed by the President's Committee is spearheading the Month, with Science Service, Washington (D.C.) as the coordinating agency.

During October, science teachers are being asked to start science projects to be carried out during the school term. Other suggested activities include: PTA, professional and civic meetings in October devoted to science subjects; science fairs; affiliation of local science clubs with Science Clubs of America; registration of students by school principals for qualifying tests for National Merit Scholarship and for Science Talent Search examinations; student assemblies featuring scientific or technological speakers; personal contacts between scientists, engineers and students through "project nights" devoted to work on science fair projects, or through "career sessions" when engineers and scientists discuss career opportunities and interesting experiences in their fields.

A poster-calendar for science classrooms and school bulletin boards provides a check-list of important dates and actions to be carried out during Science Youth Month. The poster has been distributed to 25,000 of the Nation's science teachers and to 50,000 other individuals and groups interested in promoting science. (Copies available from the President's Committee on Scientists and Engineers, Washington 25, D.C.)

Nine additional organizations have joined the President's Committee this year in sponsoring National Science Youth Month to inspire and inform young America to meet the challenge of science and engineering careers. They include:

American Dental Association, American Veterinary Medical Association, Department of Defense, National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council, National Committee for Careers in Medical Technology, Scientific Apparatus Makers Association, U. S. Air Force and Air Force Association, U. S. Army and U. S. Navy.

The Science Youth Month program was developed by a President's Committee Working Group headed by Watson Davis, Director of Science Service. Other organizations participating include: American Association for the Advancement of Science, American Chemical Society, American Medical Association, Chamber of Commerce of the United States, Thomas Alva Edison Foundation, Junior Engineering Technical Society, Manufacturing Chemists Association, National Association of Manufacturers, National Merit Scholarships, National Science Fair, National Science Foundation, National Science Teachers Association, Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies, President's Committee on Scientists and Engineers, Science Achievement Awards Program, Science Clubs, Science Service, Science Talent Search.