Dear Sponsors,

Below are Hot Topics:

1. Last year the Virginia Academy of Science launched a new outreach effort in which mentors recruited from the Commonwealth’s colleges, universities, and research centers worked long-term with students in high school classrooms on a research project of local interest. For 2020-21, there will be a strong need for supporting K-12 classrooms across the Commonwealth that will be suffering from uncertainty about the ability to meet in person and to work on science projects**. To that end, we are looking to recruit both mentors (grad students, postdocs, instructors, scientists, etc.) and high school teachers who would like their students to participate in a virtually-driven long-term research project.** To do this, we would like to offer high school instructors the opportunity to either do a project of local interest or to participate in a “Citizen Science” type initiative in which their class will work with others across the Commonwealth and (sometimes) the nation in the collection and analysis of data.

If you might be interested in serving as a **mentor** in this project, please fill out the form found at: <https://secure4.hsc.edu/forms/view.php?id=117158>

If you are a **high school teacher** with an interest in having a mentor work with your class, please fill out the form found at: <https://secure4.hsc.edu/forms/view.php?id=116443>

1. **Paper return**: We are still unable to get these to you but will plan to scan them to you and have you then give them out where you deem appropriate.
2. The VJAS Committee has decided that in 2021 the Symposium (at a minimum) will be a Hybrid Synchronous Symposium. This means that school divisions will be able to have students present to judges in-person at the host institution or virtually via Zoom or similar platform. The in-person piece will only include the student presentation. Any speakers will be done virtually as a webinar. **A final decision as to whether the Symposium will be a hybrid or ALL virtual event will be made in January.**
3. **Electronic Paper submissions only will be received online via the Reviewr platform. The Handbook is being updated** to include instructions. Please note this year there will be no research grant monies available. *September 1 is our goal for uploading and will be available* at <http://vjas.org/handbook.html>
4. The **2020 VJAS Proceedings** is available <http://vjas.org/vjas-proceedings.html>

In closing, we cannot thank you for your support and want you to know that we are here trying to continue to make a difference and create a platform that will work for all. Please continue to share pictures of the 2020 VJAS Research Symposium winners with their printed certificates!

*The VJAS Team*