

## SAINT THOMAS ACADEMY EXPERIMENTAL VEHICLE TEAM RECEIVES EXTENSION GRANT FROM LEMELSON-MIT

### *Team to Use Funds to Build Solar Car for Solar BikeRayce USA*

**MENDOTA HEIGHTS, Minn., Feb. 12, 2009** – Saint Thomas Academy announced today that its Experimental Vehicle Team (EVT) has received a \$2,000 extension grant from the Lemelson-MIT <<http://web.mit.edu/invent/>> InvenTeam program build a solar car that the team will race in the Solar BikeRayce USA <<http://www.solarbike.org/>> in May. The 2007-08 EVT received a \$10,000 InvenTeams grant that funded the development of the Safer Urban Motorcycle, a street-legal, electric motorcycle.

“The extension grant from Lemelson-MIT validates the efforts of the Experimental Vehicle Team and gives the team resources to expand their skills and test their ingenuity,” said Mark Westlake, Saint Thomas Academy physics teacher and the team’s adviser.

The solar car is already in development in preparation for the Solar BikeRayce USA, an annual international closed-course solar bike rayce. The objectives of the event are to stimulate interest in science and technology and to raise awareness of alternative energy sources. The competition will be held in May in Neosho, Mo. The competition hosts teams of high school students, adult men and women, and senior men and women. Teams race vehicles in one of four classes: stock solar cycle (pedal bike), modified solar cycle (no frame or fairing restrictions), solar vehicle (no pedals), and open class (pedals permitted).

The Academy’s EVT gives students the opportunity to solve real-world, engineering problems. Each year, approximately 15 budding scientists design and build experimental vehicles to compete in national engineering contests. Saint Thomas teams have built a one-person car that gets more than 1,300 mpg, an electric car that travels 50 miles on two car batteries, a solar bike averaging 30 mph, and a street-legal solar car they raced from Texas to California. The teams have won eight National Championships, set numerous national records, and have been featured in *Popular Mechanics* and on CNN and *Dragonfly TV*.

The team is led by Westlake, Educational Technologist Carole Loufek, and Student Directors B. Lee '09 and R Muellerleile '09.

### **About the Lemelson-MIT Program**

The Lemelson-MIT Program recognizes outstanding inventors, encourages sustainable new solutions to real-world problems, and enables and inspires young people to pursue creative lives and careers through invention. Jerome H. Lemelson, one of the world's most prolific inventors, and his wife Dorothy founded the Lemelson-MIT Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1994. It is funded by the Lemelson Foundation, a private philanthropy that celebrates and supports inventors and entrepreneurs in order to strengthen social and economic life.

### **About Saint Thomas Academy**

Founded in 1885, Saint Thomas Academy is an all-male, Catholic, college preparatory, military/leadership school committed to preparing young men to succeed in college and in life. Nationally accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS), the academy challenges young men to excel academically, spiritually, physically, and emotionally in and out of the classroom. For more information, please visit [www.cadets.com](http://www.cadets.com).

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