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Forbes' second place science project includes Turkish scientist

Turkish scientists who live abroad continue to make a name for themselves in the world of science. Cafer Yavuz, who is pursuing his Ph.D. at Rice University in the US, appeared in Forbes magazine along with his team for their project titled "Separation of Arsenic Found in Water." Forbes magazine chose the project as the world's second best breakthrough project in nanotechnology.

The project, under the leadership of Rice University biological and environmental nanotechnology department head Professor Vicki Colvin, is considered a breakthrough in the field and was also featured in one of the world's most prestigious science magazines, Science.

The project proposes an easy and inexpensive way to get rid of the arsenic commonly found in the drinking water of some developing nations, creating hope for the countries suffering from arsenic-related health problems. According to the World Bank, nearly 65 million people are at risk from arsenic-contaminated wells throughout the world. According to a report by the United Nations, Turkey is also on the list of countries that run the risk of having arsenic-contaminated water.

The award-winning project cleanses the arsenic found in water with iron oxide pieces that are a 5,000th of the size of a single strand of hair. These pieces, which have a diameter of 12 nanometers, are expected to cleanse the toxic materials from water 100 to 1,000 times more effectively than the filters used today.

Yavuz's success story goes back to his childhood. First introduced to chemistry through Yamanlar College -- a school nationally renowned for excellence -- Yavuz placed 39th in the national Science High School examinations and was actively involved with the Chemistry Olympics throughout high school. In a competition organized by the Science and Technological Research Institute of Turkey (TÜB•TAK) in 1996, the 5th National Chemistry Olympics, Yavuz won a silver metal along with the right to represent Turkey at the 29th International Chemistry Olympics held in Montreal in 1997. The silver metal he won there would be his first recognition at the international level. The following year, at the 30th International Chemistry Olympics in Australia, Yavuz won a bronze metal. His record of success would continue into his university years, and he

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graduated from Middle East Technical University's (ODTÜ) four-year honors program in chemistry in just three years -- a first in the department's 41-year history. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D. at one of the US's most prestigious educational institutions, Rice University.

08.02.2007

Sıtkı Özcan •stanbul

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