

Russian whizzes win global collegiate IT contest

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Students Eugeniy Kapun, Mikhail Kever and Niyaz Nigmatullin from St. Petersburg State University of IT, Mechanics and Optics managed to solve nine of 12 problems in the allotted five hours, displaying the mental gymnastics required in the field.

"It's not inconceivable that someone from the [contest](#) floor will end up

winning a [Nobel Prize](#)," Sal Vella, a vice president at IBM, which sponsored the ACM International Collegiate Programming Contest (ICPC), told AFP.

The top three teams were offered IBM jobs anywhere in the world, along with medals, plus a trophy for the St. Petersburg team coached by Andrey Stankevich.

Runner-ups from the University of Warsaw, which hosted the competition this year and has twice won in the past, also solved nine problems but took longer.

The problem sets featured real-world issues -- with headings like "Room Service" and "Bus Tour" -- requiring optimal solutions, like having to build the best [communications system](#) between moving asteroids.

The 112 [teams](#) competing Thursday were all finalists of the earlier regional round that involved 25,000 students from over 2,200 universities in 85 countries.

The tournament is organised by IBM and the Association for Computing Machinery and held in a different city each year, with the 2013 edition to take place in St. Petersburg.

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