Washington FPS

FROM THE AD'S DESK
APRIL 2020

Pleadd Community Problem Solving Project 2020 at Spiritridge Elementary

Kindling the Bright Minds Community Problem Solving Project 2018-2020 (multi-year) at Leota Middle School

Project Plastic Community Problem Solving Project 2020 at Tyee Middle School

Animals are Awesome Problem Solving Project 2020 at Glacier Peak High School

Hello Coaches,

This year's Virtual State Bowl allowed us to use our problem-solving skills to figure out how to allow the students to complete their GIPS booklets without actually being face to face. I commend the coaches for their flexibility and organization so that almost every team that qualified was able to participate. Some of the teams managed to complete the booklet before the schools were closed but most had to figure out how to participate remotely.

The evaluators are now critically reading and commenting on their packet of booklets, and the VSB results will be announced by April 15 and posted on the website.

According to the International Office, the International Conference, scheduled to be held in Massachusetts from June 3-7, will now take place as a virtual conference with most events occurring at about the same time as in previous competitions. However, the awards ceremony will be held on Tuesday instead of on Sunday. More details will be made available to those who qualify and register. The MAGIC competition will be held virtually at a later time than the GIPS competition this year. The topic for IC is Terraforming.

Please remember that the southern hemisphere is only just beginning to use the topics that we have just completed, so please don't post any information about this year's topics anywhere on line until 2024. Also, we completed our State Bowl a month earlier than usual this year, so don't share any tips with any other coaches outside our State until the end of April as many affiliates will not complete their State Bowls until then.

Economic Stimulus Package benefit: As a part of the Coronavirus stimulus package, donations of up to $300 to charitable organizations can be deducted on the front page of your tax return, reducing your adjusted gross income. Thus, you can make a tax-deductible donation to WAFPS without having to itemize. Please consider making a donation, using the WAFPS website under "Donate."

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COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING 2020

1st place Junior Division—Spiritridge Elementary

PLEADD: Panther Leaders Educate Against Distracted Driving

Coach: Michelle Gordon

Underlying problem: Because drivers are focused on digital devices while driving, they have manual, visual, and cognitive distractions from their surroundings, how might we educate our community on the dangers of driving distracted, so that the number of injuries and fatalities decrease in Washington State in the year 2020 and beyond?

The project: This team created a partnership with a local dealership to help distribute free stickers of *KEEP CALM and focus on the road* to customers. The stickers, which the team designed, were also distributed to their school community at a fundraising movie night. Students created a video that educates new drivers on impacts of being distracted while driving, which they presented to a local high school. In addition, students used a Jeopardy game that they created to educate others in their community.

By dividing into five separate committees within their team, they were able to learn how to present their findings and progress back to the larger group.

"Because children can't drive and are often raised not to tell adults what to do, we have experienced many situations where we witness distracted driving, but feel like we can't make a change. The more we discussed the topic, the more we realized, we can educate both drivers and children about various strategies to mitigate accidents related to distracted driving."

Team members:

Aahan Ghose, Aisha Kamra, Allie Chung, Andy Pastor, Asher Miller, Athena LaBow, Bly Vanderkolk, Caroline Osewalt, Charlize Leary, Connor Cooper, Elias Pak-Lin, Ethan Wong, Flora Zhao, Gabriella Nolawiheir, Isabelle Li, Kaitlyn Bai, Lauren Ouyang, Marie Wong, Melodie Zhang, Neve Chene, Nikhil Khosla, Sakti Krishnan, Tage Wilson, Thomas Mi, Uma Ashok, William Yoon

1st place Middle Division—Leota Middle School

Kindling the Bright Minds

Coach Matthew Bohannan

Underlying problem: Due to the fact that school support and access to advanced math enrichment are limited, which hinders students from a passion for mathematics and problem solving, how might we increase math enhancement opportunities at local elementary schools, so that lifelong love of math is fostered in students in 2018 and beyond?

The project: "We determined the best solution was to start a parent-run or student-run math club outside of school.

"We had an overwhelming response from students of all different grades and skill levels. To challenge every student, we administered a basic problem-solving test to each student and divided them into groups based on skill levels. Then, we provided each group with fun and challenging resources they can work on. We utilized available material from the internet such as https://www.academicsarecool.com and https://www.blainesd.org. We learned leadership, collaboration, perseverance, teamwork, and most importantly the joy of learning!

"After many hours of practicing, the students participated in the three competitions - Math is Cool, Mathcounts, and Washington State Math Championship. … Our sixth-grade team got 4th place, our seventh-grade team got 3rd place, and our eighth-grade team got 2nd place. The eighth-graders also got invited to Math is Cool Masters. The 4th graders we trained got invited to Math is Cool Masters also even though it was their first year.

"Our team consists of two students from Leota Middle School. We both planned out the math sessions and taught the students. We tried to make the sessions in an engaging way for the students so that they wouldn't get bored. We also assigned the homework and made sure our students showed a huge improvement since the beginning of the year."

Team members:

Ashvi Shah,
Harini Thiagarajan

2nd place Middle Division—Tyee Middle School

Project Plastic

Coach John Pearson

Underlying problem: Due to the fact that dangerous and unnecessary plastics are entering our oceans and harming marine wildlife, how might we, the Community Compadres, decrease the amount of single-use plastics entering our oceans so that more aquatic animals have the opportunity to thrive in the year 2021 and beyond?

The project: "Project Plastic is a student-led plastic drive that promotes proper recycling of plastic that would otherwise end up in our oceans. Focusing on ocean pollution, the Community Compadres collaborated with their school and community to raise awareness and money to reduce plastic waste. They collected numerous items that would normally be thrown out in the garbage, then sorted and brought them to a recycling facility. Through promoting this event they were able to raise $33 dollars that contributed directly to Surfrider Foundation, money that will contribute to keeping our oceans and beaches clean.

"What we have accomplished so far has rippled throughout our community, no matter how slight it may be. Starting with our school, we have not only informed our peers of the problem, but have also encouraged them to make their own difference. By collecting plastics from over 1,000 families in our community, we properly disposed of more than 50 pounds of #4 plastics, ink cartridges, and other plastics that aren't conveniently recyclable. This reassures people that their plastic is going to a recycling center and prevents them from putting recyclable things in the trash. We have also created a website to help answer questions and given the community advice on how to help solve this problem. Our team has influenced people in a subtle, yet inspiring way. Our main criteria for effectiveness for our Plan of Action was maximizing the scope of our impact while also maintaining accessibility of our solutions to the public.

"Our area of concern was the pollution created by single-use plastics in bodies of water. While our action plan did involve tugging at the public's heartstrings, our actual contribution to the cause was mainly on a larger scale, focusing on the wider scope of plastic pollution in general."

Team members:

Aadya Rangole, Antonia Kwan, Ava Chen, Casey Lo, Derek Nguyen, Lana Arbabi, Madeleine Ford, Malia Chopra, Naveli Shukla, Neela Maremanda, Sabrina Lim, Sophia Bai, Trey Byther

1st place Senior Division—Glacier Peak High School

Animals are Awesome

Coach Kathy Gundesen

Underlying problem: Because there are many varying factors keeping pets in our community from living happily such as in a permanent home or with adequate necessities, this may result in more animals living in shelters for extended periods of time, being euthanized, or even becoming strays. How might we find a way to spread awareness of the needs of the pets in our community so that more are adopted with their basic needs met in Snohomish County, Washington in 2020 and beyond?

The project: "Team 'Animals are Awesome' has developed and implemented a portion of a project that will raise awareness about the need for animals to become adopted while raising donations and fundraising money for animal needs in shelters in our community. In addition to creating shelter awareness posters and blankets for the Everett Animal Shelter, we are planning a culminating event at a local park to raise money and collect donations. By standing outside pet stores to ask for donations and pass out posters, we will be able to collect donations and funds and let people know our local shelter's needs. The posters were created to highlight dogs and cats that are currently in Homeward and Everett Animal Shelters. These can be easily distributed at our donation collection spots, our Pet Walk, and even to anyone who shows interest. Our Pet Walk event will invite pets from Homeward Animal Shelter that can be fostered and the entire community will be invited to partake by bringing their pet (if applicable) to play with other animals and people as well as anyone who would like to enjoy their company and may be considering adopting or fostering. We also created blankets from donated fleece material and are knitting blankets from yarn. We are continuing to create these blankets until Spring, when we will collect them all and drive them to the Everett Animal Shelter.

Team members:

Melany Herrejon, Chloe Potts, Hailey Christenson, Gracie Pitts, Ella Renschler, Alexa DeLeon

SCENARIO WRITING 2020

1st place Junior Division—Xiyuan Carol Gong

Tyee Middle School

Coach John Pearson

Cloned

A scientist helps bring back the passenger pigeon and is required to take care of it. The passenger pigeon dies from pollution and the strange new environment. The scientist's niece gets infected by pathogens from the pigeon.

2nd place Junior Division—Anvika Kaul Singh

Odle Middle School

Coach Debby Benzinger

There is no Alternative to Natural Sleep

Emily has had care-free life. She is rich, popular, has a good education, and a good family. But this all changes when her younger brother gets a strange disease and is sleepy all the time. Not only does this create the new sensation of worry, but she is growing up too, and her parents are cutting her allowance. For her, it feels like her life is crashing around her. Desperate, she decides to participate in a high-tech sleep study and what unfolds changes her life forever.

3rd place Junior Division—Vishnu Mangipudi

Odle Middle School

Coach Debby Benzinger

Life is not a Game

When the world decided to implement a social credit system, where your worth is tied to the number of points you have, it failed because of the corruption of its leaders. Tired of the failures of human politicians, the world decided to entrust its social credit system to an impartial, all-knowing leader. The Fair Artificial Intelligence Ruler, or FAIR for short, was meant to be a just ruler that worked towards the welfare of the people without letting its own desires get in the way. Under FAIR, crime, illness, and depression rates all went down, but some critics charged that gamifying life strips human beings of their freedom, and that in trying to optimize peoples' lives, FAIR takes something precious away from them – their free will. FAIR views these critics as a destabilizing threat to society and seeks to silence them. And as an otherwise docile citizen, Maria, discovers, FAIR can be a lot less fair when you fall on the wrong side of the game.

1st place Middle Division— Edmunda Li

Odle Middle School

Coach Debby Benzinger

Life in a Leaderboard

Nurse Amelia is ranked number one on the Nurse Leaderboard and is very efficient at accomplishing the tasks that heal patients. One of the patients, Max Gallagher age eight who suffers from Leukemia, gives her trouble for he has been in the hospital for far longer than he should have. Although Amelia is providing all the right treatments, Max's health seems to not be improving which slowly but surely negatively impacts her rank. It is soon learned that Max just needs the emotional support of another human being. Nurse Amelia learns to discover that life is more than just a leaderboard and sometimes the smallest reach of a hand can save someone.

2nd place Middle Division— Richard Li

Odle Middle School

Coach Debby Benzinger

Just a Pocket Pet

In the year 2058, de-extinction has opened up the door for a new type of entertainment. The Pocket Pet, a revolution of de-extinction technology, was a result of increased attention towards bringing back the casualties from our mistakes. However, this method of entertainment brings up more questions than it answers, making us question the true value of a life.

3rd place Middle Division— Sumedha Dandapanthula

Odle Middle School

Coach Debby Benzinger

Haruki

A scientist named Nova Harumura lived with her grandmother when she was young, and found out that her grandmother had a deep connection to the extinct dog species. When she grows up, she works in a lab to de-extinct dogs, and succeeds, just as her grandmother dies.

1st place Senior Division— Emily Chang

Interlake High School

Coach Heather Yancey

Sweet Dreams, Sweet Vengeance

A cardiothoracic surgeon, Dr. Apollo, undergoes an experimental gene therapy procedure, giving him the ability to stay awake indefinitely so he will not have to worry about falling asleep on the job. However, his DNA is severely damaged after a decade of no sleep, causing him to develop a brain tumor that impairs his judgment and focus during his surgical procedures. When his symptoms strike at the worst possible time, Dr. Apollo may have to pay a horrifying price for receiving a DNA alteration attempting to rid him of one of humanity's most basic needs: a good night's sleep.

2nd place Senior Division— Jake Donner

Interlake High School

Coach Heather Yancey

Sleep Debt

Dmitry Novak tests a device that maximizes the efficiency of human sleep on himself.

3rd place Senior Division— Emily Feng

Interlake High School

Coach Heather Yancey

Skinning Humanity

"Skinning Humanity" is a somber piece that warns about gamification's perversions. Told from the perspective of an immensely guilty scientist, the story follows his evaluation of a "Skinner Rehabilitation Training" program instituted as a test operation in federal prisons. While the twentieth century's Skinner Box tested reward systems on animals within an operant conditioning center, the government's experiment is merely deployed as a tool for mass prison labor—all under the ethos of innocent "gamified" techniques meant to teach prisons practice skill. Thus, my piece seeks to amalgamate issues of gamification, mass incarceration loopholes, and corrupted scientific progress.

IC INFORMATION

Champion problem solvers who have earned their spot at the International Conference will still have the opportunity to compete with others from around the world and will have access to many virtual collaborative experiences as well as their competitions.

These collaborative sessions include such events as the Thinking Tools Workshop, Senior Forum, and Topics Think Tank. More information will be available soon!

Champions from Affiliate Programs can register following instructions in the IC registration packet. The access code can be obtained from your Affiliate Director.

Thank you for understanding that further details about all competitions and events are forthcoming. Our virtual International Conference will be a celebration of Affiliate champions, but we will have opportunities throughout the summer for anyone who wants a taste of FPS competition! MAGIC (Multi-Affiliate Global Issues Competition) will be held in mid to late June, and the FPS Experience will be held in July or August via virtual platforms, and these events will be open to any and all FPSers around the world!

The International Office also wanted to offer something to our incredible coaches. FPSPI has created a community on Participate just for them. Collaborate with coaches from around the world, share ideas for how best to approach a virtual IC 2020, discuss the different components, or just take the time to meet some of your peers. This complimentary subscription will be valid through July 1. We may be many and varied Affiliates, but we are one Future Problem Solving community! To join, send an email to elizabeth@fpspi.org with your name and Affiliate.

General information for all things IC 2020 can be found at fpspi.org/ic-information/.

Registration for all students participating in IC 2020 will occur online through the International Conference Registration Website at icfpspi.org.

At least one registered coach will be required in order for it to be marked as completed.

Also please select 'coach will attend the event' when adding them to the registration.

If you do not select they will attend the event, the system will not mark your registration as completed. This is a virtual competition, so their attendance will not be required – this was the best way we could accommodate the system on short notice.

Important Dates

Mid-April: Results from State Bowl announced. **Check the WAFPS website for details.**

4/3: Advancing CmPS Cover Sheet due to IO

4/14: Advancing CmPS projects due to IO

6/4: 2020 International Conference Virtual Opening Ceremony

6/9: IC Awards Ceremony

NEW FROM IO

Through August 15, the International Office will be offering ***free*** access to interactive six-step virtual experiences on Renzulli's online platform! The first units will use the Spread of Infectious Disease and Pandemic topics, but we plan to have more available in the coming months. Watch FPSPI's Facebook page for this and other e-learning opportunities from FPSPI.

FINAL WORDS FROM THE AD'S DESK

Thank you again to all the coaches who were able to work out a way for their students to complete in the VSB. I hope that this year's competition will be an anomaly and that we do not have to resort to such measures again. I anticipate that next year's State Bowl will again be held onsite at Warm Beach.

Please call/text (509) 386-6297 or email me (jbuissinkwafps@gmail.com) any time you have questions.

Next Month: **Results of the 2020 State Bowl and more.**

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." **– Margaret Mead**