



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:**  
Kate Falk  
703-312-9211  
[kfalk@nsta.org](mailto:kfalk@nsta.org)

## **The U.S. Army Educational Outreach Program Announces 2016-17 eCYBERMISSION Competition National Winning Teams**

**ARLINGTON, Va.—July 5, 2017**—The U.S. Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP) is pleased to announce the 2016-17 national winners of the 15th annual [eCYBERMISSION](#) competition. The winning teams were announced last Friday at the National Judging & Educational Event (NJ&EE) awards luncheon.

The web-based science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) program—sponsored by the U.S. Army and administered by the [National Science Teachers Association](#) (NSTA)—is designed to cultivate student interest in STEM by encouraging students in grades six through nine to develop solutions to real-world problems in their local communities.

“The U.S. Army is committed to answering the nation’s call for increased STEM education opportunities for students,” said Louie R. Lopez, AEOP Cooperative Agreement Manager. “Congratulations to the 2017 national winners and STEM-in-Action grant recipients for your commitment to solving community issues.”

The winning teams were chosen from 20 national finalist teams, which were selected from almost 6,000 teams that entered the 2017 competition. Since the program’s inception in 2002, eCYBERMISSION has awarded state, regional and national competition winners over \$10 million in U.S. Savings Bonds.

“It’s exciting to see students thinking beyond the science classroom, expanding their imaginations and challenging their minds, while developing possible solutions to real-world issues. The eCYBERMISSION program not only helps to envision a more technologically advanced and life-changing future, but it also gives us a glimpse into the amazing student talent present in STEM education today,” said Dr. David Evans, NSTA Executive Director. “Congratulations to all of the national winning teams and their advisors for their hard work, dedication, and creative idea.”

Each member of the national winning teams received an additional \$5,000 in U.S. E.E. Savings Bonds (matured value), bringing the total received to \$9,000 each. The 2016-17 national winning teams are:

**Sixth grade: GreenHouse Gals, Lisle, Illinois**  
**Anjana Ramachandran, Divya Lidder, and Suthri Kotlo** from **Kennedy Junior High School** worked with Team Advisor **Ramu Ramachandran** to improve the local composting processes of their local community. They discovered that composting improved several local

environmental problems by keeping waste out of local landfills and nourishing the soil. They shared their findings in a newsletter called “Trash Talk”.

**Seventh grade: Lanikai Science Squad, Kailua, Hawaii**

**Heather Dinman, Emma McDonald, Lily Bachl, and Jasmine Codotte from Kailua Intermediate School** worked with Team Advisor **Kathleen Dinman** to investigate the harmful side effects of synthetic pesticides. The team created their own organic pesticide using local ingredients. This pesticide is less expensive and safer for farmers and consumers to use.

**Eighth grade: Whiz Kids, Lake Linden, Michigan**

**Gabriel Poirier, Beau Hakala, and Siona Beaudoin from Lake Linden-Hubbell School** worked with Team Advisor **Gretchen Hein** to discover which plants and vegetation could grow in stamp sand with little top soil in the hopes of remediating the soil in the community. The team plans to continue testing and working with local groups to find the best and least expensive way to remediate the soil.

**Ninth grade: The Three Musketeerets, Portland, Oregon**

**Nandhana Nixon, Ragini Dindukurthi, Namitha Nixon from STEM 4 Girls** worked with Team Advisor **Nixon Xavier** to minimize Phantom Limb Sensation/Pain for amputees using cost effective virtual reality technology. They created a prototype using virtual reality with an armband and gesture control to create a cost-effective therapy that would be easily accessible to all amputees.

NJ&EE is a week-long event that provides educational opportunities and team-building exercises for the eCYBERMISSION national finalists and STEM-in-Action recipients. Activities included hands-on STEM workshops led by Army scientists and engineers, a special session hosted by the National Inventors Hall of Fame, a visit to Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress and a tour of the National Mall, and a live-streamed showcase where students displayed and demonstrated their winning ideas. The highlight of the NJ&EE was the awards luncheon and ceremony, where the national winning team from each grade level was announced.

For more information about the eCYBERMISSION competition, visit [www.ecybermission.com](http://www.ecybermission.com) or contact Mission Control at 1-866-GO-CYBER (462-9297) or via email at [missioncontrol@ecybermission.com](mailto:missioncontrol@ecybermission.com).

***About the U.S. Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP)***

The United States Army has long recognized that a scientifically and technologically literate citizenry is our nation’s best hope for a secure, rewarding, and successful future. For over 50 years, the Army has supported a wide range of educational opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) for our youth, college and graduate students, as well as our valued teachers. Our nation’s economy has greatly benefited from the technological achievements of the last century and is destined for greater achievements throughout the 21st century. For more information about AEOP, please visit [www.usaeop.com](http://www.usaeop.com).

***About eCYBERMISSION***

eCYBERMISSION is a web-based science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) competition for students in grades six through nine that promotes self-discovery and enables all students to recognize the real-life applications of STEM. Teams of three or four students are instructed to ask questions (for science) or define problems (for engineering), and then construct explanations (for science) or design solutions (for engineering) based on identified problems in their community. Students compete for State, Regional, and National Awards. The U.S. Army is committed to answering the Nation's need for increased national STEM literacy and to expanding STEM education opportunities across the country to open doors to new career paths for American students that lead to a brighter tomorrow.

***About NSTA***

The Arlington, VA-based [National Science Teachers Association](#) is the largest professional organization in the world promoting excellence and innovation in science teaching and learning, preschool through college. NSTA's membership includes approximately 55,000 science teachers, science supervisors, administrators, scientists, business representatives, and others involved in science education.

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