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299 Teams of U.S. Students Named State Winners in National Web-Based STEM Competition

Collaborative Learning Competition—eCYBERMISSION—Designed to Inspire Student Interest in STEM By Encouraging Students in Grades Six Through Nine to Develop Solutions to Real-World Challenges in Their Local Communities

ARLINGTON, Va. — Tuesday, April 30, 2013 — The U.S. Army and the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), the largest professional organization in the world promoting excellence and innovation in science teaching and learning for all, today announced that 299 teams of U.S. students have been named state winners in the U.S. Army's eCYBERMISSION competition, one of several science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) initiatives offered by the Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP). Designed to inspire student interest in STEM, eCYBERMISSION, which is administered by the NSTA for the U.S. Army, challenged students in grades six through nine to develop solutions to real-world problems in their local communities.

First-place state winning teams receive a \$1,000 U.S. Savings Bond, valued at maturity and second-place state winning teams receive a \$500 U.S. Savings Bond, valued at maturity. The first-place teams now move on to the regional competition, where 64 regional finalists will be chosen. From there, four regional winning teams in each grade level (16 team total) will be selected. The regional winners then compete against their peers from each grade level at the National Judging and Educational Event, taking place in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. On June 21, 2013, the last day of the event, four national winners in each grade level will be chosen.

"We applaud the state winners for their excellence and creativity to propose real-world solutions that can benefit their communities and build a stronger America," said Dale Ormond, Director, U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command. "We are excited that they accepted the eCYBERMISSION challenge and their experience has inspired them to expand their interest in STEM."

21,345 students participated in the 11th year of the eCYBERMISSION competition and state winners' projects covered topics such as educational video games, garbage disposal and improving safety at school.

“Congratulations to all of the state winning teams. It’s truly inspiring to see students all over the country taking such an active role in developing solutions to real-world challenges in their local communities, while building their knowledge in the STEM disciplines,” said Dr. David Evans, Executive Director, NSTA. “We are tremendously proud of all the teams who participated. Their innovative projects and fresh ideas bring new awareness and ways for us all to be more involved in our own communities.”

Through the program, teams of three to four students are asked to identify an issue in their community related to one of seven mission challenges, including:

- alternative sources of energy;
- the environment;
- food;
- health and fitness;
- force and motion;
- national security and safety;
- robotics; and
- technology.

After selecting a mission challenge, teams—under the guidance of a team advisor—apply the scientific method/inquiry or engineering design process to propose a solution. Each team then submits a mission folder, the official write-up of their project, via the eCYBERMISSION website.

During the competition, students and team advisors are connected to eCYBERMISSION volunteers known as CyberGuides, who provide resources through discussion forums, webinars and team chat rooms. CyberGuides are Army and civilian scientists and experts in their STEM fields. The participants also receive assistance from Mission Control, eCYBERMISSION’s version of a Help Desk at NSTA, which participants may contact for assistance for technical support or questions about their project. After mission folders are submitted, a panel of virtual judges evaluates and scores the mission folders to identify the state winning teams.

Since the program’s inception in 2002, eCYBERMISSION has awarded state, regional and national competition winners with over \$8 million in U.S. Savings Bonds and more than 100,000 students have participated worldwide.

For more information about the eCYBERMISSION competition and a complete list of the state winners, visit www.ecybermission.com or contact Mission Control at 1-866-GO-CYBER (462-9297) or via email at missioncontrol@ecybermission.com.

About Army Educational Outreach Program

The Youth Science Cooperative Outreach Agreement (YSCOA) consortium was formed by the U.S. Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP) and includes Virginia Tech as the lead organization, the Academy of Applied Science, American Society of Engineering Education, the Technology Student Association, the University of New Hampshire and, new member, NSTA. AEOP is charged with addressing national needs for a STEM literate citizenry through a portfolio of educational opportunities which includes unique experiences, competitions, and high

school internships that aim to spark an interest in STEM and encourage participants to pursue college and careers in STEM fields. The Army is committed to increasing the STEM talent pool in order to ensure our national security and global competitiveness. For more information on AEOP, visit www.usaeop.com.

About RDECOM

RDECOM is the U.S. Army's primary source of integrated research, development and engineering capabilities that empower, unburden and protect the American Soldier to enable the dominance of the U.S. Army. RDECOM provides the full spectrum of basic research, development, engineering and analysis of Soldier systems, from concept to capability. RDECOM is headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., with laboratories and research and development centers throughout the country and representatives throughout the world. For more information on RDECOM, visit www.army.mil/rdecom.

About NSTA

The Arlington, VA-based [National Science Teachers Association](http://www.nsta.org) is the largest professional organization in the world promoting excellence and innovation in science teaching and learning for all. NSTA's current membership includes approximately 55,000 science teachers, science supervisors, administrators, scientists, business and industry representatives, and others involved in science education.

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