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Four Student Teams Named National Winners of 2020-21 eCYBERMISSION Competition

ARLINGTON, Va.—Monday, June 28, 2021—The U.S. Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP) is pleased to announce the 2020-21 National Winners of the 19th Annual [eCYBERMISSION](#) Competition. The winning teams were announced last Friday at the Virtual National Judging & Educational Event (NJ&EE) Awards Ceremony.

The web-based science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) program—sponsored by the U.S. Army and administered by the [National Science Teaching 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 creativity and enthusiasm that students bring to the eCYBERMISSION competition every year is truly inspiring, and that has been particularly true this week at NJ&EE,” said Christina Weber, AEOP Cooperative Agreement Manager. “The national winners, who have made it through this rigorous process, represent the best in the country and should take great pride in their success.”

The winning teams were chosen from 20 National Finalists, which were selected from 1,295 teams that entered the 2020 competition. Since the program’s inception in 2002, eCYBERMISSION has awarded state, regional, and national competition winners more than \$10 million in U.S. savings bonds.

“I never cease to be impressed by the ingenuity, passion, and resiliency of these students, who remained agile despite an extremely challenging school year,” said Dr. Eric Pyle, NSTA President. “The ability of these national winners’ to think creatively and develop innovative solutions to challenges facing their communities, all while being in virtual and hybrid learning environments, is both inspiring and reassuring. Congratulations to all the national winning teams and their advisors.” Each member of the National Finalist teams received a total of \$4,000 in U.S. E.E. Savings Bonds (matured value), and each member of the National Winning teams received a total of \$10,000 U.S. E.E. Savings Bonds (matured value) each. The 2020-21 national winning teams are:

Sixth grade: Cedar Busters

Jett Hurst, Tori Hay, Justus Jacobus, Sawyer Means worked with **Team Advisor** Laura Stary to work on eradicating salt cedars, a damaging and invasive species causing widespread adverse effects on the environment.

Seventh grade: The CQuestors

Varsha Gunda, Veda Murthy worked with **Team Advisor** Sharmila Murthy to identify the problem of increases in carbon emissions in their community due to urbanization, burning of fossil fuels and cutting down trees.

Eighth grade: Team Stumptown

Shreyas Ananth, Kapil Kakodkar, Rishab Madhusudhan, Tejaswani Datla worked with **Team Advisor** Ananth Sankaranarayanan to research how physical activity and physical therapy can reduce pain and improve physical function in adults and children suffering from arthritis or other types of rheumatic disease.

Ninth grade: Pantry Patrol

Siddharth Maruvada, Abhinav Meduri, Arnav Meduri worked with **Team Advisor** Subbarao Meduri to present a unique solution to combat the issues of food waste and food insecurity by creating an intuitive and easy-to-use application primarily focused on helping food pantries track, monitor, and eliminate food waste.

NJ&EE was a virtual event this year, providing educational opportunities and team-building exercises for the eCYBERMISSION National Finalists and STEM-in-Action Grant recipients. Activities included a Department of Defense Careers Workshop featuring Army scientists and engineers, an interactive AEOP Alumni Panel presentation, judging by Army scientists and engineers, and a livestreamed showcase where students displayed and demonstrated their winning ideas with the opportunity to win prizes through votes for the People's Choice Award. The highlight of NJ&EE was the Awards Ceremony, where the National Winning Team from each grade was announced.

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

About 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.

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 [National Science Teaching Association](#) (NSTA) is a vibrant community of 40,000 science educators and professionals committed to best practices in teaching science and its impact on student learning. NSTA offers high quality science resources and continuous learning so that science educators grow professionally and excel in their career. For new and experienced teachers alike, the NSTA community offers the opportunity to network with like-minded peers at the national level, connect with mentors and leading researchers, and learn from the best in the field.

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