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Middle School Teams Win 20th Annual eCYBERMISSION Competition

Teams Oh, Deer!, Plastic Patrol, OMg, and Busy Bee Tech were named National Winners, each student taking home the \$10,000 U.S. EE Savings Bond prize.

[WASHINGTON, D.C.] – July 5, 2022 – The [U.S. Army Educational Outreach Program](#) (AEOP) announced that teams Oh, Deer! (6th grade), Plastic Patrol (7th grade), OMg (8th grade), and Busy Bee Tech (9th grade) were crowned National Winners for their respective grade levels at the 20th Annual [eCYBERMISSION](#) National Judging & Educational Event (NJ&EE). Each team member will now receive \$10,000 in U.S. EE Savings Bonds at maturity.

The weeklong event, which took place June 27 – July 1 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., saw five National Finalist teams per grade level from across the country compete for the grand prize. Teams presented their eCYBERMISSION projects to a panel of senior Scientist and Engineer judges from the U.S. Army, who then unanimously selected the National Winner for each grade level. Winners were announced at the [National Awards Banquet](#), which took place on July 1. This year’s winners are:

Oh, Deer! – 6th grade

Oh, Deer! created a device, the Steer Deer Clear, to prevent deer-vehicle accidents by producing variable light and sound signals that deter deer from approaching the road. The team is comprised of students Benjamin Manhein, Neel Boteler, Maley Thornhill, and Lily Frances Garner and led by Team Advisor Ashley Klein. They hail from St. Richard Catholic School in Jackson, Mississippi.

Plastic Patrol – 7th grade

Plastic Patrol studied the use of marine and freshwater algae as bioaccumulators of microplastics and discovered four species that were successful in doing so. The team is comprised of students Jett Hurst and Anneron Dooley and led by Team Advisor Laura Stary. They hail from Southcrest Christian School in Lubbock, Texas.

OMg – 8th grade

OMg studied the impact of different soil additives on increasing the magnesium content in food crops and determined a cost-effective and eco-friendly solution. The team is comprised of students Nidhi Sagaram, Samil Sharma, and Viraj Vyas and led by Team Advisor Aruna Rao. They hail from Granger Middle School in Aurora, Illinois.

Busy Bee Tech – 9th grade

Busy Bee Tech studied and determined the necessary components of a smart beehive system to optimize colony health. The team is comprised of students Ambika Rao and Romayssae Saidi and led by Team Advisor Shelly Witham. They hail from High Tech High School in Secaucus, New Jersey.

“The U.S. Army prides itself on values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. In dedicating their time, energy, and minds to addressing problems that they see in their communities, these students have shown a true dedication to these values,” said Christina Weber, AEOP Cooperative Agreement Manager. “Congratulations to this year’s eCYBERMISSION National Winners. We are excited to see how they continue to use their talents to create a better Nation through STEM.”

“The STEM projects presented this year by these imaginative teams provide true solutions to many of the challenges our communities are facing,” said Erika Shugart, Ph.D., Executive Director, NSTA. “Congratulations to the National Winners and their Team Advisors on their outstanding projects that represent the kind of collaboration, creativity, and ingenuity that not only benefits the community, but also inspires other students who see that they can be problem solvers too.”

In addition to the National Winners, two other teams received awards at this year’s competition. Team Vision (8th grade, Utah) received the Army Values Award for best embodying the U.S. Army values throughout the National Judging & Educational Event. Team River Revivers (6th grade, North Carolina) received the People’s Choice Award, which was decided by the popular vote of at-home viewers after all teams presented their projects at the livestreamed [National Showcase](#).

Registration for the 2022-2023 eCYBERMISSION competition opens in the fall. To learn more about eCYBERMISSION, please visit www.ecybermission.com.

About eCYBERMISSION

eCYBERMISSION is an online science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) competition for students in grades six through nine that promotes teamwork, self-discovery, and the real-life applications of STEM. Students work in teams, with the help of a Team Advisor, to choose a problem in their community to explore with science or solve with engineering. Students experience STEM firsthand and learn how they can use it to change the world while interacting with STEM professionals and competing for state, regional, and national awards. eCYBERMISSION students have applied for and received patents, expanded their projects into businesses, and achieved further national recognition, including the first ever TIME’s “Kid of the Year”. eCYBERMISSION is part of the Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP) and is administered by the National Science Teaching Association (NSTA).

About the 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 U.S. 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.

Through AEOP, the U.S. Army continues its long tradition and strong commitment to the advancement of STEM education and literacy. Leveraging its most valuable assets – world-class scientists and engineers and research facilities – AEOP offers our nation’s youth and teachers a collaborative, cohesive portfolio of opportunities that effectively engage future workforce generations in meaningful, real-world STEM experiences, competitions, and paid internships. For more information about AEOP, please visit www.usaeop.com.

About NSTA The [National Science Teaching Association](http://www.nsta.org) (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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