



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**U.S. Army's eCYBERMISSION Kicks Off 16<sup>th</sup> Year of Competition**  
*Registration Now Open for 2017-2018 STEM Competition; Students Imagine Innovative Solutions to Real-World Challenges that Could Build a Better Future*

**ARLINGTON, Va.—September 7, 2017**—The [U.S. Army Educational Outreach Program](#) (AEOP) today announced the kickoff of the 16<sup>th</sup> annual [eCYBERMISSION](#) program, a web-based competition designed to cultivate student interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) by encouraging students in grades six through nine to develop solutions to real-world challenges in their local communities. Students can win on a state, regional, and national level, with national winning teams receiving up to \$9,000 in U.S. EE Savings Bonds, valued at maturity. Registration is open until December 13, 2017 at [www.ecybermission.com](http://www.ecybermission.com).

"The U.S. Army's long history of promoting innovation and supporting student learning in science, technology, engineering, and math comes from our belief that STEM literacy is essential for all students and is the key to tomorrow's skilled workforce, strong economy, national security, and general well-being," said Louie R. Lopez, AEOP Cooperative Agreement Manager. "Utilizing the Army's unique resources—world-class scientists, engineers, and research facilities—AEOP programs, such as eCYBERMISSION, offer students exciting, one-of-a-kind experiences. Through the competition, students not only explore issues that affect their local communities, but are given a platform to create solutions to tackle these issues using STEM as the building blocks and foundation."

"The key to fostering and sustaining the next generation's interest in science, technology, engineering and math is to engage them in discovery and innovation," said Dr. David Evans, NSTA Executive Director. "We believe the skills students learn and build while participating in this competition will ignite a real passion for STEM and hopefully propel them to pursue careers in the STEM fields."

Through the program, which is administered by the [National Science Teachers Association](#), teams of three to four students plus an adult team advisor 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 apply the scientific practices or engineering design process to construct explanations or design solutions. Each team then submits a mission folder, the official write-up of their project, via the eCYBERMISSION website.

A panel of virtual judges evaluates and scores the mission folders on the basis of several criteria to identify state winning teams. The top three scoring state winners at each grade level in each

region then move on to the regional competition, where they compete with other teams in their grade across the region for an all-expenses paid trip to the National Judging and Educational Event, taking place June 2018.

[Registration](#) for the 2017-2018 competition will remain open through December 13, 2017. Final mission folder submissions are due February 28, 2018. To participate, students must be U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents, and must be officially enrolled in either sixth, seventh, eighth, or ninth grade in a public, private or home school, or a Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) school abroad. Students registered by November 8, 2017 will receive a free STEM kit.

The response to eCYBERMISSION last year was unprecedented, with thousands of teams registered from all 50 U.S. states, territories, and DoDEA sites. The continued success of eCYBERMISSION and its registered students depends on dedicated volunteers to support the program. eCYBERMISSION is once again seeking dynamic individuals who can contribute his or her knowledge, skills and enthusiasm to the program. Volunteer roles include:

- [Ambassadors](#) serve as the face of eCYBERMISSION by promoting the competition and recruiting other volunteers in the community. Register [here](#) to be an ambassador.
- [CyberGuides](#) provide online assistance to eCYBERMISSION teams by answering questions and give guidance through the use of discussion forums, instant messaging, and live chat sessions. [CyberGuides' registration](#) is open through February 28.
- [Virtual Judges](#) – Individuals with an interest or background in STEM or education who independently evaluate team mission folders online. [Virtual judge registration](#) is open through February 28.

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 the NSTA***

The Arlington, VA-based [National Science Teachers Association](#) is the largest professional organization in the world promoting excellence 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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