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Future Problem Solving Hosts 24th Annual Student Conference in Storrs March 30-31
Senator Edith Prague Will Speak and Present Awards to Top Connecticut Students

“Caring For Our Elders” Topic Inspires Kids

Storrs, CT – The Future Problem Solving Program of Connecticut, Inc. (FPSPofCT) is hosting its 24th annual conference for Connecticut’s top student problem solvers at EO Smith High School on the UConn campus March 30th and 31st. Connecticut Senator Edith Prague, a long-time advocate for elderly issues and Vice Chair of the Select Committee on Aging, will be presenting student awards to honor the winners of the Future Problem Solving Competition.

FPSPofCT is a non-profit educational program that prepares Connecticut students for the future by teaching them the essential problem solving skills that they need today. The program teaches students *how* to think, not *what* to think. Teams of Future Problem Solvers have been studying the topic of ‘Caring for our Elders’ for the past two months in preparation for the state conference. On March 30th, the first day of the competition in Storrs, student teams and individuals alike will be presented with a possible future problem scenario that relates to the topic of ‘Caring for Elders.’ Then students will use the program’s six step problem solving process to analyze the potential situation, determine the challenges, describe the underlying problem, outline solutions, evaluate solutions and detail their best solution. The competition is broken into three divisions based on age: junior division (grades 4-6), middle division (grades 7-9) and senior division (grades 10-12). The students’ work is evaluated by a panel of judges to determine who in Connecticut, is the best group of Future Problem Solvers.

On Friday the 30th, the students will register, enjoy opening remarks and write up their solutions for the to-be-announced challenge. On the morning of Saturday March 31st, the teams will begin preparing their skits for the competition later in the afternoon. The awards

ceremony will take place on Saturday evening after Senator Edith Prague speaks to and honors the top Future Problem Solving teams and individuals, along with the winners of the creative writing competition. Connecticut first place winners will then be invited to attend the International Future Problem Solving Conference at Colorado State University in Fort Collins May 31st -June 3rd.

Community Problem Solving, or CmPS, is perhaps the most interactive and exciting component of the Future Problem Solving program. CmPS involves the seventh step of the problem solving process – implementation. Teams of students work together to determine a problem in their school, their community, the nation, or even the world. They then use the problem solving process to determine the underlying problem, generate and evaluate solutions, then implement the best plan of action. Individuals may also submit their community problem solving projects into competition. Just this year, a group of students from Hebron Elementary School raised \$1,602 through their “Coins for Care” project and donated that money to the Hebron Interfaith Human Services Food Bank. Another group of students from North Haven Middle School raised \$2,400 and collected enough food to fill 200 shopping bags with snacks for children in an after school program at the Boys and Girls Village of Milford.

About the Future Problem Solving Program

FPSPofCT, Inc. is a not for profit 501 c 3 educational organization dedicated to preparing Connecticut’s students for the future by teaching them essential problem solving skills. The challenging materials of the program are designed to help students learn *how* to think, not *what* to think. Future Problem Solving motivates and assists students to develop an active interest in the future, improve written and oral communication skills, work cooperatively, and develop research skills while learning about complex social and scientific issues. Students think on their feet - creatively, critically and analytically. FPSPofCT, Inc. is an affiliate of the International Future Problem Solving Program that includes over 250,000 students annually from the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and Russia. For more information, please visit the national organization’s website at www.fpsp.org and the local Connecticut affiliate website at www.fpspofct.org.

How It Works: The Future Problem Solving Model

1. Identify Challenges in the Future Scene
2. Select an Underlying Problem
3. Produce Solution Ideas to the Underlying Problem
4. Generate and Select Criteria to Evaluate Solution Ideas
5. Apply Criteria to Solution Ideas
6. Develop an Action Plan
7. Community Problem Solving: Implementation of Plan in the Community

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