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CT Future Problem Solving Announces State Student Winners

CT Kids Will Travel to Colorado State University for International Competition

Elderly Advocate CT Senator Edith Prague Presented Awards to Top Students in Storrs

Storrs, CT – The Future Problem Solving Program of Connecticut, Inc. (FPSPofCT) wrapped up their 24th annual conference for Connecticut's top student problem solvers at EO Smith High School on the UConn campus this weekend. Connecticut Senator Edith Prague, a long-time advocate for elderly issues and Vice Chair of the Select Committee on Aging, presented student awards to honor the winners. Students from Captain Nathan Hale Middle School, Convent of the Sacred Heart School, East Windsor High School, Marlborough Elementary School, North Haven Middle School, North Haven High School and RHAM High School are now moving onto the international conference at Colorado State University May 31st -June 3rd.

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. Future Problem Solvers have been studying the topic of 'Caring for our Elders' for the past two months in preparation for the state conference. Students were presented with possible future problem scenarios that related to the topic of 'Caring for our Elders.' Then students used 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.

Also judged in the competition were skits that were performed by teams of students. Each team had to act out solutions for future hypothetical problems associated with the growing senior population. Each team was given a collection of props to use in their skit, items such as paper towels, a pinwheel, tin foil, four chairs, etc. The teams acted, sang, danced, and encouraged audience participation as they competed to win the skit competition. Each group had to include the quote, "The longer I live, the more beautiful life becomes." - Frank Lloyd

Wright.

A few examples of some of the creative ideas and solutions that were acted out in the skits:

- Kids volunteering to cheer up elderly patients in healthcare facilities
- Educating and training more medical specialists for seniors
- A tax system of pooled money to fund healthcare needs for the elderly
- A musical concert series for seniors
- A tobacco tax to benefit solar panel medical technology
- Genetic re-engineering of DNA to restore health in the elderly
- Emotionally responsive robots that encourage mental health and happiness among lonely seniors

Future Problem Solving 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 was evaluated by a panel of judges who determined the best group of Future Problem Solvers in the state.

During the awards ceremony Saturday evening, Senator Edith Prague spoke to the students. "The growing elderly population is the biggest segment of our population in this country," explained Senator Prague. "I am 81 and going strong, and I'd like to thank all of you in the Future Problem Solving Program, for thinking about the elderly population and how you can help. Even if it just mowing the lawn, or shoveling snow for an elderly neighbor, you can all make a difference," said Prague.

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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