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Future Problem Solving Hosts 25th Annual Student Conference in Storrs March 28-29
*Marianne Solomon, International Director Will Speak and Present Awards to Top
Connecticut and New York Students*

"Debt in Developing Countries" Topic Challenges Kids

Storrs, CT – The Future Problem Solving Program of Connecticut, Inc. (FPSPofCT) is hosting its 25th annual conference for Connecticut's top student problem solvers at EO Smith High School on the UConn campus March 28th and 29th. Governor M. Jodi Rell has designated March 29th as Future Problem Solving Program of Connecticut Day. Marianne Solomon, the Future Problem Solving Program International executive director, will be presenting student awards to honor the Connecticut and New York winners of the Future Problem Solving Competition.

FPSPofCT is a non-profit educational program that prepares Connecticut and New York 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 'Debt in Developing Countries' for the past two months in preparation for the state conference. On March 28th, 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 'Debt in Developing Countries.' 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 and New York, are the best group of Future Problem Solvers.

Students who qualified in Connecticut will represent the following schools/districts:

Capt. Nathan Hale Middle, Coventry	North Branford Middle School
Convent of the Sacred Heart, Greenwich	North Haven Juniors
Cromwell High School	North Haven High School
Cromwell Middle School	North Haven Middle School
East Windsor Middle School	RHAM High School, Hebron
East Windsor High School	RHAM Middle School, Hebron
Fairfield County Homeschoolers	Sage Park Middle School, Windsor
Hebron Elementary School	Timothy Edwards Mid. School, S. Windsor
Lebanon Elementary School	Vogel-Wetmore School, Torrington
Marlborough Elementary School	Windemere Elementary School, Ellington
Nathan Hale-Ray Middle, E. Haddam	Woodside Elementary School, Cromwell

Those students representing New York include the following:

Albany Academies, Albany	Freeport High School
Atkinson School, Freeport	Hewitt School, New York
Dodd Middle School, Freeport	Tompkins Square Middle School, New York
Fallsburg Jr./Sr. High School	

In its 25th year, FPSPofCT is also mentoring teams from New York. Students from New York will be at the conference and will have their own competition. This will enable New York students to qualify for the International Competition. The goal is to find someone in New York to ultimately direct that program. Until that time, Connecticut has been administering the program for students in New York.

On Friday the 28th, the students will register, enjoy opening remarks and write up their solutions for the to-be-announced challenge. On the morning of Saturday March 29th, the teams will begin preparing their skits for the competition later in the afternoon. The awards ceremony will take place on Saturday evening after Ms. Solomon speaks to and honors the top Future Problem Solving teams and individuals, along with the winners of the creative writing competition. Awards will also be given to those participating in the Art Competition and the Skit Competition. Connecticut and New York first place winners will then be invited to attend the International Future Problem Solving Conference at Michigan State University in East

Lansing on May 29th -June 1st.

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 North Haven Middle School has addressed the problem of a smooth transition for incoming 6th graders in their school. Another group of students from North Haven Middle School is working on the issue of illiteracy in children (ages newborn to 21) in foster care. They are conducting a Book Fair for Foster Care in their school and plan to contribute books to 310 children in foster care in the New Haven area.

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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