



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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First District-Wide STEAM Contest is a Big Success!

(Los Alamitos, CA) – On May 24, twenty finalists in the Los Alamitos Unified district-wide STEAM Contest presented their projects before a panel of judges. The contest was sponsored and facilitated by LAEF (Los Alamitos Education Foundation) and took the place of what would have been the 7th annual district-wide STEAM Showcase. Students of all ages created amazing projects that incorporated science, technology, engineering, the arts and math (STEAM).

Last year, the 2020 STEAM Showcase was cancelled due to COVID-19 and LAEF worked with Los Alamitos USD schools to bring Virtual STEAM Fairs to each school community. This year, still unable to provide the showcase due to the pandemic, LAEF organized this STEAM Contest for elementary (grade levels TK-2 and 3-5) and secondary (grade levels 6-8 and 9-12) students. First, Second and third place prizes were awarded to each grade level group. LAEF, with the help of Los Al STEAM teachers, provided students with video lessons and online information to assist with their project creation.

The contest began April 1, with projects due by May 10. Over 150 STEAM projects were submitted and five finalists in each grade level group were announced on May 17.

“We are so excited about student participation in our STEAM Contest,” exclaimed Carrie Logue, LAEF’s Executive Director. “Students did an amazing job, and it was evident that much hard work, time and effort were given to each project.”

The following is a list of the finalists (in alphabetical order), their projects and the prize winners:

Elementary Finalists

Grade Levels TK - 2nd

- Arya Longlerno – “Hydroponics” (2nd Place, \$150)
- Delilah Rios – “Salt Crystal Garden”
- Isabella Joanne Roy-Lazarito – “Robot Build” (3rd Place, \$75)
- Carson Schiele – “Banana Circuit” (1st Place, \$300)
- Leah Thompkins – “Where Does Wind Come From”

Grade Levels 3rd - 5th

- Leah Jackson – “How Does Temperature Affect Oxygen in Ocean Waters” (1st Place, \$300)
- Manav Sathish Kumar – “Soil Erosion”
- Emma Livingston & Joanne Marki – “Ferris Wheel”
- Ellie Oh – “COVID-19 Animation” (2nd Place, \$150)
- Nathaniel Priyakumar – “COVID and Lungs” (3rd Place, \$75)

Secondary Finalists

Grade Levels 6th - 8th

- Lucas Beltran, Emma Osborne and Kayla Rhee – “It’s Just Water Under the Bridge – Or is it?” (3rd Place, \$125)
- Spencer Bystrom – “The Pet Feeder” (1st Place, \$500)
- Luna Cerrillo & Sofia Linzaga – “Gluten Free -vs- Gluten Cupcakes – The Differences”
- Phyllisia Rosen – “COVID or Convenience? A Pandemic Survey of the Public”
- Alivia Seard – “Read Seed” (2nd Place, \$250)

Grade Levels 9th – 12th

- Alexander Bystrom – “Final Jeopardy Wagering Using Reinforcement Learning” (3rd Place, \$125)
- Arjun Ghosh – “Investigating Effective Alternatives to Silver-based Pressure Sore Treatments and Other Novel Applications of Gold and Copper Nanoparticles” (1st Place, \$500)
- Landon LaPoint & Zachary Norris – “Hydrogen Endurance Racing Team Telemetry System”
- Lucas Torgerson – “Commonsense Antifungal Defense”
- Nora Zajzon – “Using Brain Computer Interfaces to Play Video Games” (2nd Place, \$250)

On May 24, the finalists in each grade level group presented their projects to a panel of judges, who determined the winners. The judging panel for elementary students featured Los Alamos science educators Morgan Martin and Matt Maya, LAEF board members Felicia Gonzalez of Edward Jones and Kendra Jones of Epson, NovaWurks Mechanical Engineer Marc Baldwin, and Boeing Director Bill Cusato.

The judging panel for secondary students featured educators Melisa Baluyot, Dr. Dan Bennett and Dr. Kenneth Lopour, LAEF board members Leanne Voigt and Ruth Anne Salau Kurkjian, Chiropractor Dr. Sean Braithwaite and Javatinis owner Rob Jahncke.

First, second and third place winners in each grade level group were announced on May 25. Winners received cash prizes and all finalists will receive plaques.

LAEF is the non-profit partner of Los Alamitos Unified School District. LAEF enhances educational excellence by providing after-school and summer enrichment programs to children in grades Pre-K to 12. LAEF impacts all students by providing significant funding for STEAM teachers and instruction, mental health and wellness, and social emotional learning as well as igniting new programs and providing valuable resources. For more information, visit www.LAEF4Kids.org or email info@LAEF4kids.org today!

Pictured below are 2021 LAEF STEAM Contest First-Place Winners.



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