



WICHITA FALLS STUDENTS SHOW LASER FOCUS AT 2018 STATE STEM COMPETITION

(Anna, TX) – What could you do with a bakery box, a laser beam, six lenses and an hour? Students from across Texas were presented with this challenge on Saturday, April 28th, as part of the 33rd annual TAME State STEM Competition, sponsored by Raytheon and held at the YMCA Collin County Adventure Camp in Anna, Texas. Students used the supplies to focus and diffuse a laser beam during the Engineering Design Challenge segment of the competition.

The State STEM Competition is an annual event organized by the Texas Alliance for Minorities in Engineering (TAME), a statewide non-profit organization committed to preparing Texas students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). TAME's annual State STEM Competition is the focus of a year of intense preparation for Texas students in TAME clubs around the state. TAME students from grades 6-12 qualified to attend the event at one of 14 Divisional STEM Competitions.

This year's competition brought 299 Texas to Anna to test their skills in math, science, and engineering. After spending the morning taking individual math and science tests, students came together in groups combining schools and grade levels to practice their collaborative problem solving skills over the Engineering Design Challenge.

In his morning address to students, State Senator Van Taylor highlighted the importance of STEM education at both an individual and a community level. An afternoon appearance by Raytheon executive and former astronaut Robert Curbeam had students asking questions about space travel and life on the International Space Station.

Melissa Cortez, an 8th grade student at Smylie Wilson Middle School in TAME's Lubbock Chapter, emphasized the impact that participation in the event can have on students: "Being part of TAME and the STEM Competition, it's just riveting. I'm very excited to meet new people, to explore new options, to see what my life could be outside of Lubbock. I am just so happy to be here. I've met so many wonderful people. I know that if I can do anything here, I can do anything anywhere else."

The top six students in each test and the top six teams in the Engineering Design Challenge were recognized with awards and medals. In addition, three teams received special awards for creativity, teamwork, and innovation. The Texas Board of Professional Engineers sponsored the Innovation Award.

Ivye Arioja Dolino, a senior from Presidio High School in TAME's West Texas Chapter, designed the winning artwork for the event shirts and programs. Ivye plans to attend The University of Texas at Austin this fall.

TAME's Outstanding Senior Award, sponsored by Shell Oil Company, was presented to Brisa Diaz, a high school senior from Everman Joe C. Bean High School in TAME's Dallas Chapter. Brisa plans to attend The University of Texas at Arlington and pursue a degree in Aerospace Engineering this fall.

The STEM Competitions, part of TAME's multi-pronged STEM engagement strategy, celebrate diversity and achievement in STEM and encourage the development of a peer and mentor network. Thanks to the support of a number of sponsors, gratefully acknowledged below, the events are offered free of charge to all participants.

We are thrilled to announce that 21 students from the Wichita Falls Chapter competed in the event.

The following students placed in the competition:

Hirschi High School

Anthony Shuey - 2nd Place in 9th Grade Math

Williams Nzeh-Biko - Judges' Choice Award for Innovative Switcher in the Engineering Design Challenge

Iowa Park High School

Samantha "Libby" Tseng - 2nd Place in the Engineering Design Challenge



Kirby Middle School

Ann James - 3rd Place in 6th Grade Math
Isaac Enriquez - 4th Place in 8th Grade Science

McNiel Middle School

Christopher Echols - 5th Place in 7th Grade Science
Emily Spurgers - 1st Place in the Engineering Design Challenge
Sai Chada - 1st Place in 6th Grade Math, 5th Place in 6th Grade Science

Nocona Middle School

Jessica Flores - Judges' Choice Award for Teamwork in the Engineering Design Challenge

Rider High School

Collin Hebner - 6th Place in the Engineering Design Challenge

Wichita Falls High School

Daniel Portillo - Texas Board of Professional Engineers Innovation Award in the Engineering Design Challenge

For more awards, photos, statistics, and stories from the competition, visit tame.org/state2018. Contact the TAME program coordinators at programs@tame.org if you have any questions or comments.

The 2018 State STEM Competition was sponsored by the following organizations.

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Raytheon

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