



The Bloomsburg Children's Museum is pleased to announce that 32 individual projects participated in the 9th annual science fair, which was held at the Bloomsburg Firehall on January 18th.

Representing 6 different schools, all of the students showed their creativity through their unique projects. Of the 32 projects entered, 19 students will be moving on to the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS) Regionals held at Susquehanna University on March 9th. There the students will have a chance to move on to the PJAS State Science Fair, held at Penn State University on May 20th.

The students who earned first place are as follows. John Grosso (Montgomery Middle School), Blake Rothermel (Line Mountain Middle School), Isabelle Clinard (Montgomery Middle School), Ben Farwell (Home School), Amelia Shrimp (Montgomery High School), Anna Krembler (Home School), Nathan Corbeill (Home School).

Earning second-place scores were Chris Farwell (Home School), Ben Kremser (Home School), Chase Waring (Montgomery Middle School), Glayne Gozum (Montgomery High School), Charlie Corbeill (Home School), Leni Farwell (Home School).

Finishing with a third-place award were Victoria Sleiman and Ariana McWilliams (Benton Area Junior-Senior Highschool), Emily Miller (Montgomery Middle School), Lily Gingery (Montgomery Middle School), and Jackson Gabrielsen (Home school).

Also moving onto the PJAS Regionals are Ethan Vincent and Cole Sorber (Benton Area) and Tim Farwell (Home School).

Brian Houser, Field Manager at PPL and current Museum Board President, remained a fundamental component through both the organization of the event and his help as a judge. Touching on the exciting futures of these students, he is eager to see what inspiring innovations are to come.

Houser said, "As the Children's Museum Board President, I am impressed by the remarkable displays of creativity, curiosity, and scientific inquiry showcased at the science fair. The students who participated demonstrated their impressive dedication to their projects and overall scientific acumen. Their innovative projects illuminate the potential for bright futures and I am confident that these budding scientists will continue to make significant contributions in our communities."

Kevin Haughan of Finishing Engineer, Kawneer and Arconic Company, has been a long-standing judge since the creation of the annual science fair. This being his 9th time as a judge, he had a very enlightening perspective.

Haughan said, "The first question I have always asked at the beginning of interacting with a participant is: Why? Why this? The first few years, the answers were mostly that it was seen on YouTube, and they wanted to try it. A few students would answer with honest enthusiasm for the topic, and they are typically the ones that stood out. Now most of the students give answers as to why with a personal

connection, and few students not only want to understand what they are working on but the supporting science.”

Robert Everly, local Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science Region 5 Director, oversees the fair and on multiple occasions has acted as a judge. He mentioned the importance of the annual science fair for both the students participating and the community alike. He also noted that students moving on to the regional competition should aim to convert their presentational formats to appeal to the differing format of the event.

Everly said, “I have attended (and helped as a judge) at each of the last few science fairs held at the Bloomsburg Children's Museum and found the student projects both interesting and well done. I could clearly see that many of the students would do well at PJAS regionals. The big difference is that they need to convert their presentation from a Tri-Fold visual presentation to a PowerPoint presentation. In PJAS, each student has 10 minutes to present their work to a panel of judges, who then have 5 minutes to ask questions. Each student has their work scored by the judges based on a set of criteria. Those who score "First Awards" qualify to present at states. The State PJAS competition is held at Penn State University in mid-May.”

He continued, “At a time when student test scores are indicating that our country is falling behind many other countries in math and science, programs like these are so important!”

This event would not have been possible without the support of the PPL Foundation. Thanks go to Brian Houser and PPL for all they do to make the science fair a success.

The Bloomsburg Children's Museum is a 501(c)3 nonprofit overseen by a board of directors. This organization strives to offer unique, sustainable, and dynamic learning opportunities for youth through year-round interactive exhibits, programming, and community outreach. For more information, please visit <https://the-childrens-museum.org/> [the-childrens-museum.org]