

GLOBAL VIRTUAL CLASSROOM

2015/2016 AWARD WINNING WEBSITES ANNOUNCED

May 1, 2016 – The Give Something Back International Foundation (GSBI) has announced the winners of the 2015/2016 Global Virtual Classroom Contest (GVC) -- a free online collaborative learning project that fosters creativity, cross cultural understanding, helping others, while also learning website design skills.

Sponsored by GSBI, the GVC program provides an opportunity for primary and secondary school students from different countries to work with and learn from students in those countries, as they collaboratively design a website on a topic of their choosing. A panel of International judges evaluates the final work and determines the winners.

Contest participants virtually collaborated with students in other countries to build and submit websites designed around a thought provoking theme. As such, the contest aims to enhance abilities required for the 21st century such as: cross-cultural communication, collaboration, social responsibility, and technology skills. This year the contest had participants from 16 countries including participants from India, Russia, Indonesia, Czech Republic, Canada, Afghanistan, Australia, Brazil, Italy, Czech Republic, Thailand, Taiwan, Cote d'Ivoire, Hungary, Turkey, Malaysia and the USA. A map of participants is available at: <http://virtualclassroom.org/global2.html>

Their efforts were judged for content, presentation, collaboration, and a helping focus. The helping focus encourages students to also demonstrate achievement of a helpful objective such as personal, social and/or environmental responsibility or support for a worthy cause.

JoAnn Patrick-Ezzell, the Chairman and one of the co-founders of the Give Something Back International Foundation said, "This year the students displayed amazing creativity and collaboration in exploring their selected topics. Beyond the impressive accomplishment of their website projects, we are very pleased and grateful that the students engaged in a myriad of ways to give back to their schools, their communities, and to others around the world in very meaningful ways."

This year's Grand Prize winner for the primary school category is the "Helping and Sharing" website created and built by students from VVDAV Public School in India; Leslie H. Walton Middle School in Virginia, USA; and, TED Istanbul College Foundation Private High School in Turkey. The website not only emphasizes helping the needy, but also exemplifies 'actions' speaking louder than 'words' with student involvement in their communities.

The Second Place winners (this year there was a tie) in the primary school category is the "Preserving Heritage to Promote Peace" website created and built by students from Darbari Lai DAV Model School in India; International Community School of Abidjan in Cote d'Ivoire; and, Lakeside Middle School in New Jersey, USA. Tied for second place is "The Best Journey Takes You Home" website design by Shadow Forest Elementary in Texas, USA; Horace Mann Elementary in Illinois, USA; and Voznesenskaya School in the Russian Federation.

In Third Place of the primary school category is “Web Universe” website presented by St. Clare Elementary School in Canada; Darbari Lai DAV Model School in India; and STEAM Middle School in Texas, USA.

The secondary school category’s Grand Prize winner is the “A View from my Home Window” website presented by students at St Mark’s Sr. Sec. Public School Janakpuri in India; Rapini School in Thailand; and GLOBAL English School in Brazil. The website includes outstanding original videos - especially inspirational were the “Heroes of our Neighborhood” profiles. Deserving a special mention is the GLOBAL English School from Brazil, who, with only four students, stepped up when another school had to drop out. Because of the great communication amongst the schools, the four students became an integral part of this GVC team.

The Second Place winner for the secondary school category is the “Climate Change” website developed by Tajrobawi Girls High School in Afghanistan; Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Devrala Bhiwani in India; and Anderson High School in Ohio, USA.

In Third Place of the secondary school category is the “Perception of Perfection” website created by Liberty High School in Missouri, USA; St. Mark’s Senior Secondary Public School Meera Bagh in India; and St John’s Angelican College in Australia

Certificates of participation are awarded to all students. Plaques are presented to the schools of the winning teams. The winning primary and secondary teams receive \$1000. A GSBI scholarship/sponsorship to a needy, disadvantaged student will be given on behalf of each school on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place primary and secondary teams. Two of this year’s primary winners, donated their monetary prize back for more scholarships. Each school will receive a certificate of recognition of their sponsorship. Special Merit awards are also presented for exceptional academic merit, for significant helping focus accomplishments, for creativity, for collaboration, and for the innovative use of multimedia. Merit award winners receive software from Tech4Learning.com.

To view the winning websites visit www.VirtualClassroom.org.

Online applications for the 2016/17 program are also available on the site. Contest sign-up begins each June. There is no cost for participation. The contest runs from October 1 until April 1, with results announced in May.

The International website contest is made possible by Give Something Back International (GSBI), a nonprofit educational foundation headquartered in Sarasota, Florida. GSBI’s goal is to provide life changing, quality educational opportunities to children, young adults, and teachers around the world.

“GSBI is dedicated to empowering, enabling and connecting students around the world using Internet technologies,” said their President Andrew Ezzell. “It is enormously gratifying to enable students learn to use technology to reach out to each other across great distances. We’re delighted to see the Global Virtual Classroom contest facilitate such positive cross-cultural collaboration.”