



MEDIA ALERT | For Immediate Release
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Contact: Connie George
Mobile: 412.638.7029
GeorgeC@CarnegieScienceCenter.org

Contact: Madelyn Dinnerstein
Office: 412.237.3427 / Mobile: 412.334.4017
DinnersteinM@CarnegieScienceCenter.org

HEMPFIELD AREA HIGH SCHOOL TAKES FIRST PLACE IN CONTRAPTION CONTEST
SEVERAL OTHER SCHOOLS ALSO WIN AWARDS IN EVENT AT CARNEGIE SCIENCE
CENTER

PITTSBURGH, Dec. 13, 2017 – Hempfield Area High School’s fortune-telling machine took first place in Carnegie Science Center’s 2017 Chain Reaction Contraption Contest, powered by Westinghouse Electric Company.

Contraptions from Greater Latrobe Senior High School and Cambria Heights High School took second and third place, respectively, in the competition, held Dec. 8 at Carnegie Science Center.

High schools could enter either one or two contraptions in the contest, which had 43 contraptions representing 35 schools. This year’s theme was “Weigh It!”

The three top place winners were chosen from eight finalists. In addition, judges chose winners of nine special awards.

Hempfield Area’s entry, Rube’s Radically Random Rationalizer, was an old-time fortune-telling machine with a spinning head that landed on either “Yes” or “No” in response to a question and stemmed from the concept of weighing an answer. Each of the four student presenters for the team and the school received a \$150 Amazon gift card, and the school also received a trophy.

The team also won one of the competition’s special awards—Longest Successfully Executed Contraption—sponsored by Westinghouse. The run was 73 seconds long.

Greater Latrobe's entry, Court in Session, weighed the guilt or innocence of a suspect. Each of the four student presenters and the school received a \$100 Amazon gift card, and the school also received a trophy. That team also won a special award—What Will You Create?—which recognizes creativity and innovation and is sponsored by Inventionland.

Cambria Heights' entry, Let Freedom Ring, weighed a mini Statue of Liberty, which turned out to weigh 17.76 ounces. Each of the four presenters and school received a \$50 Amazon gift card, and the school also received a trophy. Cambria Heights, a newcomer in the competition, also won the special award for Rookie of the Year, sponsored by Carnegie Science Center.

The other five finalists were Indian Creek High School's Creek Land team, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart High School, Seneca Valley Intermediate High School, Somerset Area High School, and South Fayette High School.

Other winners of special awards were:

- Cornell High School—Most Efficient Reset, sponsored by Bayer HealthCare.
- Indian Creek High School, Creek Land team—Best Presentation, sponsored by Carnegie Mellon University.
- Mars Area High School—Best Use of Gravity, sponsored by Carnegie Science Center.
- Our Lady of the Sacred Heart High School—Most Green, sponsored by ALCOSAN.
- Riverside High School—Best Transportation System, sponsored by Bombardier Transportation.
- Seneca Valley Intermediate High School—Best Execution of a Theme, sponsored by Kennywood Amusement Park.

The competition challenges high school students to create a contraption that completes a task in 20 or more steps and that runs for 30 seconds to two minutes. The contraptions cannot rely on electricity from a plug to power their steps and typically rely completely on mechanical power. Teams are judged on a variety of factors, including the reliability of the contraption, how well it fits the theme, how long it takes to reset it for a second run, creativity, a presentation, and the progress reports teams must send in before the competition day.

"Every year, we are astounded by how creative the students are," said Lisa Kosick, coordinator of the contest for Carnegie Science Center and the Science Center's Education Coordinator. "It always is exciting to see how they respond to the engineering challenge and the ingenuity of their contraptions."

Chris Savinda, Manager of Performance Improvement at Westinghouse and the company's coordinator for the contest, said Hempfield Area and Greater Latrobe were very close in the competition and that both teams had strong presentations.

"Hempfield Area was scored slightly higher by the judges in creativity and incorporation of a theme," Savinda said. "A comment from the judges was in regard to their 'clever use of physics principles.'"

Savinda went on to explain that Westinghouse supports the competition because "we need the next generation of engineers, scientists, researchers, thinkers, and fixers to lead us to a stronger future."

"By participating in the contest," he said, "the students also will learn other skills necessary to be successful in school and beyond. Teamwork, problem solving, project management and effective communication all are critical skills necessary to succeed in this competition."

About Carnegie Science Center

Carnegie Science Center is dedicated to inspiring learning and curiosity by connecting science and technology with everyday life. By making science both relevant and fun, the Science Center's goal is to increase science literacy in the region and motivate young people to seek careers in science and technology. One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, the Science Center is Pittsburgh's premier science exploration destination, reaching more than 700,000 people annually through its hands-on exhibits, camps, classes, and off-site education programs.

About Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

Established in 1895 by Andrew Carnegie, Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh is a collection of four distinctive museums: Carnegie Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Science Center, and The Andy Warhol Museum. In 2016, the museums reached more than 1.4 million people through exhibitions, educational programs, outreach activities, and special events.

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