

NEWS RELEASE

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Contact Merry Constantino- Executive Director

office: 716-882-5590

mobile: 716-861-5590



Young Inventors Showcase Perseverance and Innovation!

The Western New York Invention Convention (WNYIC) recently held its annual Invention Convention under the unusual conditions caused by COVID-19 and the resultant school closings. As this year's 2020 slogan "**Adapt & Invent**" states, the event that usually takes place in-person had to quickly pivot to become virtual.

Instead of demonstrating their inventions and being interviewed by judges in person, inventors from Kindergarten through 8th grade had to plan, create, and submit a 4-6 minute continuous video (with no editing!) of themselves telling the judges about their invention journey. Most of those journeys happened at home along with the burden of distance learning and little, if any, teacher input. While some of the contestants presented inventions from competition already held at their schools, many had to start from scratch. The judges, all from STEM fields in locations across Western New York viewed and rated those videos on a variety of criteria- also virtually.

These students identified many challenges that reflect the circumstances they have been living in for the last few months! They brainstormed solutions and built prototypes that they tested and improved. There were inventions that reflected upon social distancing such as "Tie Mask" and "Handi-Sani-Pen". There were inventions that reflected on family activities such as "Get Moving" and "Beat the Cheat Cardholder". And what about all the extra eating and sleeping people have been doing? There was the "Cake Cutter 2000", "Helpful Table", "Diet Sensor", and "Comfy Napper"! Other inventions showcased ways to assist others such as "The Climbing Walker", Adjustable Swingset For Every Body", and "Playground Sensor Pads".

On May 29th, 2020, the WNYIC Awards Ceremony was held as a Facebook Watch Party, with the Inventors, Parents, Teachers, Families, and Sponsors watching and commenting online as Andy from WKBW, returned as Master of Ceremony. The top 5 winners have been invited to compete against over 500 Inventors at Invention Convention 2020 U.S. Nationals, also being held virtually from the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan. The National Awards Ceremony will be held on Facebook on July 2.

Following are the WNYIC 2020 Award Winners.

1st Place Inventor of the Year: 4th-8th Grade

Brendan and Patrick McNaughton, 8th Grade, Lasalle Institute, Troy, NY*:

The Tie Mask- For those times when you need a mask and all you have is your tie!

*Because the Capital Region does not currently run an Invention Convention, we invited Lasalle Institute to participate in our virtual event. We are hoping that their students' excellent work will be the incentive needed to begin an Invention Convention in their area!

2nd Place: 4th-8th Grade

Makayla Wilkins, 4th Grade, Edison Elementary School, Tonawanda, NY:

The Dancing Suitcase- A portable studio, complete with Ballet Barre, Tap and Acromat surfaces, and places to hang costumes.

3rd Place: 4th-8th Grade (tied)

Timothy Johansen and Dominic Blackstone, Grades 6 and 7, representing the Rivendell Raptors from Rivendell Study Center, Tonawanda, NY:

Closed System Snow Melting Heat Generator- A way to melt snow on a roof and use the hydro-turbine power created by the melted snow to create the energy needed to melt the snow.

3rd Place: 4th-8th Grade (tied)

Chloe March, 4th Grade, Colonial Village Elementary School, Niagara Falls, NY:

Beat the Cheat Cardholder- A cardholder that keeps others from seeing your hand of cards.

1st Place Inventor of the Year: Kindergarten-3rd Grade

Owen Thomas, Kindergarten, West Street Elementary School, Sanborn, NY:

Get Moving!- A game for the whole family that promotes physical activity and gets them "off their screens".

About WNY Invention Convention:

The mission of Western New York Invention Convention is to develop and enhance creative thinking and problem-solving skills in children in grades K-8 through the processes of invention, innovation, and entrepreneurship- while encouraging interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM).

We are proud to provide a forum that encourages creative and critical thinking, trains educators to pass on these skills, and showcases the rich creativity of the youth in our community at our annual event. WNY Invention Convention celebrates young inventors from public, private, and charter schools as well as home schools and Scout troops.

Visit us on Facebook to see the video of the Ceremony and all of the winning inventions ([facebook.com/WNYInventionConvention/](https://www.facebook.com/WNYInventionConvention/)). For more info, visit wnykidsinvent.org

Video Links:

1st Place- 4th-8th: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDwBm5HSqfY&list=PL650lwRqRZcrw1FpqwNTB0_38cvo_jxK&index=5

2nd Place- 4th-8th: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4QBVYsYTGo&list=PL650lwRqRZcrw1FpqwNTB0_38cvo_jxK&index=3

3rd Place- 4th-8th (tie): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3clMloBqtQ&list=PL650lwRqRZcrw1FpqwNTB0_38cvo_jxK&index=4

3rd Place- 4th-8th (tie): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83SxKWXmSxA&list=PL650lwRqRZcrw1FpqwNTB0_38cvo_jxK&index=2

1st Place- K-3rd: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFqgNKI2PbY&list=PL650lwRqRZcrw1FpqwNTB0_38cvo_jxK&index=1