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DCMST students win drone contest

Two Dearborn Center for Math, Science and Technology students won recognition –and free drones - in a national drone contest.

Ammel Mutahr took the grand prize, and Madeline Gillette won second prize in the "How Would You Drone? Drones for Good Video Contest."

Both students are part of Tooba Mansoor's Advanced Placement Environmental Science class at DCMST, a half day program. Mutahr also attends Fordson High School, and Gillette goes to Dearborn High.

"When preparing for this contest, my students and I focused on important current global issues and came up with solutions using drones. The contest provided an opportunity for students to generate creative ideas and use critical thinking and reasoning skills to solve problems," Ms. Mansoor said.

The contest was sponsored by PCS Edventures, a provider of K-12 science, technology, engineering, arts and math programs. Students ages 13 to 18 from across the country were invited to submit videos 60 to 90 seconds long detailing how drones could be used to solve a problem.

Sixty four videos were submitted. The public cast more than 14,000 votes for their favorite videos, and the top 15 were reviewed by a panel of judges for originality, solution, creativity and quality.

As grand prize winner, Mutahr will receive a personal Riot 250R Pro sport drone and her DCMST class will get a Discover Drones classroom package. Ms. Mansoor said she was excited to incorporate the drone kit into her classes, which also include Honors Biology and Physics. She also plans to collaborate with other teachers interested in using the drones for science-based projects.

Mutahr's grand prize video "Rescue Drones" suggested drones be used more in emergency situations to help those in need without endangering the lives of rescuers. One example included using drones to take floatation devices to victims at risk of drowning in turbulent flood waters.

Gillette's video focused on "Using Drones to Prevent Oil Spills." Drones could be a quicker, safer way to inspect offshore oil rigs for potential safety issues and thus prevent mishaps that could injure workers or create massive environmental damage from spills, she said.

Gillette will receive a drone kit and other items for finishing second.

"This contest and its incredible success was a unique opportunity to put drones directly in the hands of today's learners, allowing them to be active participants in the enormous drone landscape, preparing them to shape the future of UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicles) as we know them," said Cynthia Hernandez, PCS Edventures director of sales and marketing.

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Photo caption
PR 33 DCMST drone winners - *Madeline Gillette, left, teacher Tooba Mansoor, and Ammel Mutahr pose at the Dearborn Center for Math, Science and Technology. Mutahr took the grand prize in the national "How Would You Drone? Drones for Good Video Contest" and won drone sets for herself and the school. Gillette took second place in the contest. The teens created their videos for Ms. Mansoor's AP Environmental Science class.*