

State students dream up eco-friendly future cities

BY DARLA SLIPKE

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Eighth-grader Carter Stewart and a group of his peers devised a future city where energy comes from a man-made tornado and friction caused from sensors on the road.

Their ideas were just a few of the creative ways middle school students conceived of building green cities with affordable living options for the future. Dozens of students from throughout the state presented their ideas to judges Saturday during the regional finals of the Future City Competition at Oklahoma Christian University.

The Future City Competition is an annual event that challenges students to develop designs and models of a city of tomorrow. This year's theme was green living and affordable living options for people who have lost their homes to a disaster or financial emergency.

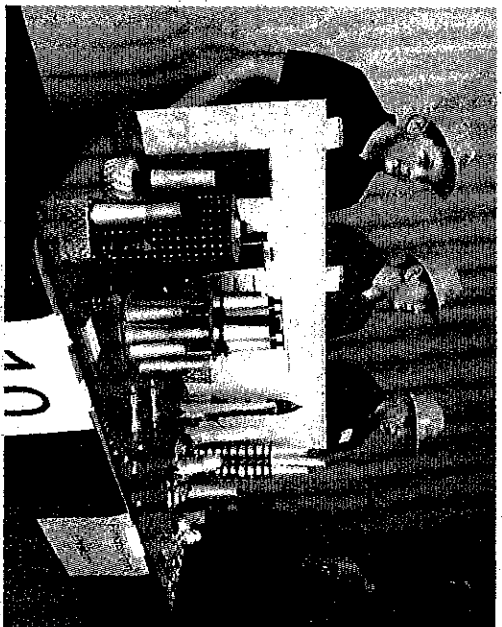
Students spent months working in small teams with the help of a teacher and an engineer mentor. They created their cities using SimCity software, then wrote a research paper and built a table-top model of their design, which they presented to judges on Saturday. Models had to be made using recycled materials that cost less than \$100.

Stewart's team from Burlington Middle School wanted to use unique power systems that would improve people's quality of life while helping the environment.

"If people are doing their part for the city, it will make them feel better," Stewart said.

Judges evaluated each project based on a number of factors, including creativity.

Madison Kay's team from Summit Middle School in Edmond gave a skit during their presentation. Kay acted as a tour guide who informed a tourist and a scientist, played by her teammates, about their city of the future. The vision for their city, called "Republic De Calabaza," or "The Pumpkin Republic," was inspired by pumpkins and the way plants draw resources



Perkins-Tryon students Ryan Richards, left, Ben Kadevy and Kyle Richards show their city Saturday in the Future City regional finals at Oklahoma Christian University.

PHOTO BY PAUL HELLSTERN, THE OLAHOMAN

AT A GLANCE

TOP WINNERS

- > A team of students from St. Philip Nerf School in Midwest City qualified for the 18th annual Future City National Finals in Washington, D.C. which takes place Feb. 13-17. The students earned the spot by winning first place at Saturday's regional competition in Edmond for their future city called "Promise."
- > Students from Perkins-Tryon Junior High School placed second at the regional competition for their city called "Elysium."
- > A city called "Manuelita," designed by First Lutheran School of Ponca City, placed third.

SPECIAL AWARDS

- > People's choice: "Manuelita" by First Lutheran School.
- > Best transportation system: "Techlado" by Summit Middle School.
- > Most innovative power system: "Golden Waters" by Summit Middle School, Edmond.
- > Best essay: "Promise" by St. Philip Nerf School.
- > Best futuristic city: "Granville" by Sequoyah Middle School, Edmond.
- > Best indoor environment: "Elysium" by Perkins-Tryon Junior High School.
- > Best use of innovative construction materials: "Hydlaa" by Fort Gibson Schools.

from the earth to survive. The students created a water system with a network of pipes that extended to underground reservoirs and acted like roots to provide water for the city.

The reservoirs were designed to re-fill from aquifers in the mountains nearby.

Seventh-grader Kylie Space and her team from Wellston Middle School built their city to move like a ship that could fly into space and land on water.

They included easy-to-assemble portable homes, walkways that extended from building to building in the air, monorails and

solar power in their design.

"We wanted to make it a lot easier to move around, and we wanted citizens to be happy and comfortable in their city," Space said.

She and her classmates used a variety of recycled materials, including aluminum foil, bottles, paper towel rods and CDs to build their model. About the only thing they used that wasn't recycled or donated was glue and batteries, sixth-grader Colton Danker said.

"It kind of gets us ready for what we think the future might be about," Danker said.