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Don Bosco students to compete in Real World Design Challenge

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DES MOINES - A group from Don Bosco Catholic High School will be among 30 students from across Iowa competing Saturday in the Real World Design Challenge.

The challenge, taking place at the Science Center of Iowa, provides students an opportunity to apply classroom lessons to technical problems currently faced in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics - or STEM - professions. The event, which starts at 9 a.m. and goes until 4 p.m., is open to the public.

Five teams of three to seven students in grades nine to 12 will make presentations during the day. It will conclude with one team receiving the Governor's Cup, awarded by Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds, and an all-expense paid trip to Washington D.C. for the national finals.

Other teams competing Saturday are from Corning High School, Des Moines Hoover High School, Marshalltown High School and Davenport West High School. Each will share their designs for "an efficient, low-carbon-emission and environmentally friendly personal light sport aircraft." The teams will also share a 2,000-word essay about what they would see and do if given the opportunity to fly their design across the country. Schools with participating teams received \$1 million in professional engineering software, training on the software, curriculum materials and access to mentors.

Teams will be judged by a panel of professors from Iowa's regent universities, industry professionals and a representative from the Iowa College Student Aid Commission.

"The Real World Design Challenge is a great opportunity for Iowa students to apply classroom learning to complex problems facing our society," Karen Misjak, executive director of Iowa College Aid, said in a news release. "Iowa is faced with a worker shortage in STEM fields. We need to encourage greater student achievement and interest in STEM careers. By having students confront problems facing our nation's leading industries, we not only encourage academic achievement, but also show them the promise their future can hold by pursuing STEM-related professions."

The state-level challenge is sponsored by GEAR UP Iowa (administered by Iowa College Aid), the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Department of Transportation, Iowa State University, John Deere, NASA, Project Lead the Way, Rockwell Collins, Science Center of Iowa, Softronics, the University of Northern Iowa and the University of Iowa.

The Science Center of Iowa is at 401 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway in Des Moines. For more information on the Real World Design Challenge go to www.realworlddesignchallenge.org.

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By JIM SULLIVAN,
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By CARSON TIGGES,
carson.tigges@wfcourier.com

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