Three Riverside County Schools Selected for Coveted Solar Cup Competition

Students learn about conservation, electrical, mechanical engineering, teamwork and more

Riverside, CA – Western Municipal Water District (Western) announces its three sponsored teams from its service area in western Riverside County to participate in the 2018 Solar Cup Competition, hosted by Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. A collaborative team including Elsinore High School, Lakeside High School and Temescal Canyon High School, will represent Lake Elsinore. Teams from Poly High School (which has won two consecutive first place titles) and Norte Vista High School in Riverside will also be competing.

“This year the Lake Elsinore team is a collaboration of three local high schools. The Elsinore High School students will implement all the mechanical components. The Lakeside High School students provide support for the technical reports and public service announcement, and Temescal Canyon High School students will support the team with engineering and machine shop skills,” shared Rick Wolter, lead advisor for the Lake Elsinore team. “Some of our students face learning disabilities, and the Solar Cup competition gives them the opportunity to learn real-life skills that motivate them to succeed in other academic areas.”

This past summer eligible high schools in western Riverside County applied to earn placement as one of Western’s teams. The competition begins this fall with planning and then moving on to a boat building workshop. Students are tasked with building a solar powered boat, about the size of a small canoe. Throughout the year, the students experiment with various elements of the boat to increase speed, power and efficiency. They are assigned with several technical reports, as well as various completion elements to increase over all points, including a public service announcement.

“This will be our 5th year participating in Solar Cup competition,” said Gary Packler, lead advisor for the Norte Vista High School team. “Our student population draws from an at-risk community, and this project keeps them in school and motivated to finish.”

The final step in the competition is the race weekend held at Lake Skinner from May 18-20, 2018. During the race, teams qualify for sprint and endurance races. With one student as the skipper in the driver’s seat, boats are finally set sail and are powered through the water. Overall scores are compiled dating back to workshops and reports submitted throughout the year.

Each year, Metropolitan assigns its member agencies in Southern California an allotment of how many teams they are able to sponsor. As a member agency, Western was permitted to sponsor three teams. The co-sponsor for the Elsinore team is Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District and for the Riverside teams is Riverside Public Utilities.

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Western Municipal Water District provides water supply, wastewater disposal and water resource management to the public in a safe, reliable, environmentally sensitive and financially responsible manner.