

GLOBAL VIRTUAL CLASSROOM 2013/2014 AWARD WINNING WEBSITES ANNOUNCED

May 5, 2013 – The Give Something Back International Foundation (GSBI) has announced the winners of the 2013/2014 Global Virtual Classroom Contest (GVC) -- a free online collaborative learning project that fosters creativity, cross cultural understanding, helping others and teaches IT and website design skills amongst students working together from around the world.

Sponsored by GSBI, the GVC program provides an opportunity for primary and secondary school students from different countries to work with and learn from students in other countries, as they collaboratively design a website on a topic of their choosing. Teams are comprised of either three primary or three secondary schools from different countries. A panel of international judges evaluates the final work and determines the winners.

Contest participants virtually collaborated with students in other countries to build and submit websites designed around a provocative theme. As such, the contest aims to enhance abilities required for the 21st century such as: cross-cultural communication, collaboration and technology skills. This year the contest had participants from 18 countries including participants from India, Kenya, Malaysia, Russia, Czech Republic, Afghanistan, Spain, Korea, Greece, Italy, Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan, South Africa, Cote d'Ivoire, Hungary, Pakistan and the USA. A map of participants is available at: <http://virtualclassroom.org/global2.html>

Their efforts were judged for content, presentation, collaboration, and a helping focus. The helping focus encourages students to also demonstrate achievement of a helpful objective such as personal, social and/or environmental responsibility or support for a worthy cause.

JoAnn Patrick-Ezzell, the Chairman and one of the co-founders of the Give Something Back International Foundation said, "Beyond the impressive accomplishment of the website projects, we are so pleased that the students engaged in a myriad of ways to give back to their schools, their communities, and to others around the world in very meaningful ways. This years winners very effectively demonstrated creativity as well as the innovative use of technology in exploring their selected topics."

This year's Grand Prize winner for the primary school category is the "Love Earth" website created and built by students from Percy Julian Middle School in Oak Park, Illinois, USA ; Tainan Municipal Haidon Elementary School in Taiwan; and Voznesenskaya School in the Russian Federation. The website highlights the importance of learning what the earth needs and then acting on that knowledge.

The Second Place winner in the primary school category is the "Feeding the Future World" website designed by Forest Park Middle School, Forest Park, Illinois, USA; International Community School of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; and St. Therese School, Kanss City, Missouri, USA.

In Third Place of the primary school category is "Unique But one" website presented by Tajrobawe Girls High School, Herat, Afghanistan; Jawaar Navodaya Vidyalaya Devrala Ghiwani, Haryana, India; and Plaza Park International Prep Academy, Evansville, Indiana, USA.

The secondary school category's Grand Prize winner is the "Teenage Issues" website presented by students at Delhi Public School, Vasant Kunj, India and Littleton High School, Littleton, Colorado, USA. The website highlights teen problems, but also is filled with positive solutions and strategies for navigating that challenging time in life.

The Second Place winner for the secondary school category is the "Preserving Our Past, Forging our Future" website developed by DAV Public School, Pushanjali Enclave, Delhi, India; St Paul Lutheran High School, Farmington, Missouri, USA; and Liceo Classico Giulio Cesare, Rome, Italy.

In Third Place of the secondary school category is the "Animal Realm" website created by Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Derala Ghiwani, Haryana, India; Percy Julian Middle School, Oak Park, Illinois, USA; and Tajrobawe Girls High School, Herat, Afghanistan.

Certificates of participation are awarded to all students. Plaques and cash awards are presented to the schools of the winning teams. The Grand Prize award is \$500 for each winning school. The second place award is \$250 for each winning school and the third place award is \$75 to each winning school. Special Merit awards are also presented for exceptional academic merit, for significant helping focus accomplishments, for creativity, for collaboration, and for the innovative use of multimedia. Merit award winners receive software from Tech4Learning.com.

To view the winning websites visit www.VirtualClassroom.org.

Online applications for the 2014/15 program are also available on the site. Contest sign-up begins each June. There is no cost for participation. The contest runs from late October until April 1, with results announced in May.

The International website contest is made possible by Give Something Back International (GSBI), a nonprofit educational foundation headquartered in Sarasota, Florida. GSBI's goal is to provide life changing, quality educational opportunities to children, young adults, and teachers around the world.

"GSBI is dedicated to empowering, enabling and connecting students around the world using Internet technologies," said their President Andrew Ezzell. "It is enormously gratifying to watch kids learn to use technology to reach out to each other across great distances, and we're delighted to see the Global Virtual Classroom contest facilitate that kind of cross-cultural collaboration."

The contest is now seeking a new sponsor for the event. Interested parties should contact Andrew Ezzell at ezzell@gsbi.org for additional information.