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## **Holy Family School Students Recognized in National Science Competition**

***Students design "The Nutrition Expedition" to educate young students about healthy eating and how fun it can be!***

Port Allen, Louisiana—April, 19, 2010—Bright ideas, solid research and teamwork won four students from Holy Family School in Port Allen, Louisiana, a berth as semifinalists in the Christopher Columbus Awards, a nationwide program that challenges middle-school students to explore opportunities for positive change in their communities.

These middle school students designed a program to educate second grade students in their school about what foods are nutritious, what vegetables are tasty, and how to grow these foods. Their main goal was to help educate the community around them about how to make healthy choices so that obesity in the area would decline. Working together with student buddies to see the benefits of eating well and to make eating well more enjoyable will bring the community closer together and increase healthy habits over time. That's the hope of this team of 7<sup>th</sup> graders—Gaven DeVillier, Austin Watts, Gabe Hunt, and Anthony Duquano, and their teacher Pam Lewandowski.

Second grade students were given a pretest to see how interested they were in eating fruits and vegetables, and to see whether or not they knew what foods were healthy for them. Students then met with local nurses to discuss healthy eating, local gardeners to learn about growing healthy foods, and the second grade class to help them learn more about each topic. Afterwards they gave the second graders a posttest to see if they learned about nutrition and were more interested in healthy eating. The next step is to grow a garden with the second grade class and show them how fun eating healthy can be! Of the project, Anthony Duquano states, "This experience has helped me become more understanding of those that are obese. I have learned that obesity is a big problem in the United States, and have learned to work better in a group."

A panel of community leaders, scientists and experts in science education judged this idea as one of the top 30 **Christopher Columbus Awards** entries in the U.S. More than 1,000 students and coaches participated nationwide.

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**FEATURING THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION COMMUNITY GRANT**

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### **A Chance to Compete at Walt Disney World®**

On April 27, eight of the 30 semifinalist teams will be named winners of an all-expense-paid trip to the *Walt Disney World*® Resort, where they will compete in the Christopher Columbus Award's National Championship, June 13-18, 2010.

Rewards include \$20,000 in U.S. Savings Bonds for the top two national winners. In addition, one team will bring home the \$25,000 Columbus Foundation Community Grant to help bring its idea to life in the community.

The finalists also will attend the **Christopher Columbus Academy**, a custom-designed educational program. Conducted by scientists, engineers and educators, the program reveals the science and technology behind the thrills and excitement of *Epcot*® and the *Magic Kingdom*.®

### **Positive Community Change**

The Christopher Columbus Awards challenge teams of middle-school students to explore and discover opportunities for positive change in their communities using science and technology. Now in its 14th year, the competition has attracted more than 18,000 students from diverse backgrounds all across the U.S. The program is sponsored by the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation and it is endorsed by the National Middle School Association and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

### **Past Winners**

Past winners have included a group of Native American girls who built a study hall out of straw on the Crow Indian Reservation in Montana, and a group of students from New Jersey who developed a technology to help deaf athletes communicate with their coaches while on the playing field.

### **Strong Participation from Girls, Minorities**

The program attracts many students who may not typically enter an academic or science competition. More than half of the entrants are girls, and nearly 25% are from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, statistics that are higher than those of most science competitions. The Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation believes the teamwork aspect and community focus draws a broader range of students to enter.

For more information, please call 1-800-291-6020 or visit [www.christophercolumbusawards.com](http://www.christophercolumbusawards.com).

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