Winners Announced In Westchester's First App Development Bowl

Students from across the county developed mobile applications to assist those with Alzheimer's or dementia and their caregivers.

BY EMILY DINUZZO

Continuing to capitalize on its designation as a “top digital county,” Westchester held its inaugural Smart Mobile App Development Bowl on April 17. Thirty teams of students from high schools and colleges across the county competed to create mobile apps that would aid patients with degenerative cognitive diseases like Alzheimer's and those patients' caregivers and families.

The apps were judged in two parts: a three-minute presentation to a panel of judges and a one-on-one live demonstration of the apps in action. The apps will be made freely available for the public.

Sean Sacks, a junior at Bedford's Fox Lane High School, said, “this has been a great experience for high school students. Our computer teacher told us about [the app bowl] and helped us work on it.” Sacks said he plans on studying computer science in college, and it's a good bet he's on the right track: his team was recognized in almost every award category. The Fox Lane team created a scrapbooking app that allows patients to see pictures of family and friends to offer emotional support.

One sponsor, Jean F. Copolla, a Pace University professor, said, “a lot of schools had teachers who took these kids under their wing. We want smart people in Westchester County and we
From left, Dr. Steve Safier, president, health & wellness solutions, Panasonic Corp. of North America; Dr. Jean F. Coppola, associate professor of information technology, Pace University's Seidenberg School of Computer Science & Information Systems; Westchester County Executive Robert P. Astorino; grand prize winners Mark Aldrich (Yorktown Heights resident and freshman at Soundview Preparatory School in Yorktown Heights) and Lindsay Aldrich (Yorktown Heights resident and junior at Yorktown High School); Dr. Amar Gupta, dean, Pace University's Seidenberg School of Computer Science & Information Systems; and William McGrath, senior vice president and COO, Pace University.

want people to know that Westchester is high-tech. The county is a partner with us. Joining forces and resources can get us there.”

The Smart App Development Bowl was part of Rob Astorino’s “Westchester Smart” initiative to improve Westchester's economy with programs like job training, optimizing local development projects, and increasing communications between the county's for-profit and not-for-profit business leaders. During the award ceremony, Astorino said there were “no losers in this room —everyone deserves recognition.”

Although not every team received an award, there were a few that were consistently recognized. In each category, the winners received either $500 for first place, $350 for second place, or $150 for third place. The winners are as follows:
Mobile App Caregiver Award

This award was for the top three teams that designed an app that best served the wellbeing of the caregiver to support the needs of the caretaker.

1. ASSIST (App Specialists in Science and Technology) - Soundview Preparatory School - Yorktown Heights
2. The Koding Kidz - Fox Lane High school - Bedford
3. Mamaroneck Tigers - Mamaroneck High school - Mamaroneck

Mobile App Creativity Award

This award was for the top three teams that received the highest marks in content, design, technological innovation, and the unique nature of the underlying idea.

1. Silver Cross – Pace University - Pleasantville
2. Mamaroneck Tigers - Mamaroneck High school - Mamaroneck
3. LumInosiT – St. Francis Preparatory School - Fresh Meadows, NY

Mobile App Alzheimer’s Association Functionality Award

This award was for the top three teams that best provided and verified app content as it is displayed on the actual mobile device.

1. LumInosiT – St. Francis Preparatory School - Fresh Meadows, NY
2. The Koding Kidz - Fox Lane High school - Bedford
3. Independents- SUNY Suffolk Community College; Manhattanville College; Ossining High school - Bedford & Ossining

Mobile App Usability Award

This award was for the top three teams whose app best validated controls, such as boxes and buttons, were easy to use, and were appropriate for the task.

1. The Koding Kidz - Fox Lane High school - Bedford
2. Mamaroneck Tigers - Mamaroneck High school - Mamaroneck
3. Independents- SUNY Suffolk Community College; Manhattanville College; Ossining High school - Bedford & Ossining

The Grand Prize

The grand prize was given to the team who achieved the top score across all three judging categories: creativity, functionality, and usability. The winner was ASSIST - Soundview Preparatory School - Yorktown Heights. They team will receive quite a number of prizes, which include:

$1,000 cash

State-of-the-art technologies donated by Panasonic, which includes, a wearable 4K
Camcorder, an adventure camera, and a pair of over-the-ear noise-canceling headphones.

They were honored at Rob Astorino's 2015 State of the County Address.

They will have an opportunity to pitch their app to a panel of industry experts at the “Face Time for Entrepreneurs” session at the HealthTech 2015 Conference on May 19, 2015.

Other awards for participants included summer internships at Burke Medical Research Institute and Westchester County internships.