MEDIA CONTACT: **Dan Attenberger**
AGP & Associates, Inc.
Phone: 989-839-5800
att@agp-inc.com

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REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR FIFTH ANNUAL
A.H. NICKLESS INNOVATION AWARD COMPETITION
Up to $77,500 in prizes to be awarded to top three local teams and their schools

UNIVERSITY CENTER, MICH., Sept. 5, 2017 – After awarding approximately $290,000 in scholarships and technology grants to local students and schools in its first four years, the A.H. Nickless Innovation Award is now accepting registrations for the 2017-2018 academic year competition.

The award, presented by the Nickless Family Charitable Foundation, is an annual competition for high school students ages 13 to 18 in Bay, Midland, Saginaw and Tuscola counties. Its goal is to inspire passion for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) subjects and challenge students to work in teams to think innovatively and develop solutions to problems impacting the world in areas such as alternative energy, health care, science, technology and life sciences.

Registration for Phase One of the competition began Sept. 1 and ends Oct. 31. Prospective participants can find more information about the competition, read the rules and regulations, and register online at ahninnovationaward.com.

During Phase One, each team is required to submit a two-page description of its proposed project. In November, regional experts will choose 20 projects to continue in the competition; each of those teams will be granted $1,000 to develop their projects during Phase Two, which lasts until March 31, 2018. On April 21, 2018, teams will present their projects during a daylong event at Saginaw Valley State University.

Members of the three winning teams will receive scholarships, and each of those teams' schools will win a STEM education grant. Available prizes total $77,500 annually and are awarded as follows:

- **First place** receives up to five **$5,000 scholarships** for student team members and a **$20,000 STEM education grant** for the school
- **Second place** receives up to five **$2,500 scholarships** for student team members and a **$10,000 STEM education grant** for the school
- **Third place** receives up to five **$1,000 scholarships** for student team members and a **$5,000 STEM education grant** for the school

For the 2016-2017 competition, the winning teams and their projects were:

- **First place:** From **Herbert Henry Dow High School** in **Midland**, Team Leader Brandon Zhu and team members Aditya Middha, Mitchell Hayes, Dachuan Yan and Megan Heydrick, coached by Steve Poole, created a prototype medication regulation device combining the technologies of a breathalyzer-like sensor, a timer and an automatic medication dispenser to prevent dangerous uses of prescription medication.

- **Second place:** From **Freeland High School**, Team Leader Jacob Hare and team member Drew Hubbard, coached by Tom Short, created a life-size prototype of an energy-saving parking lot light that included a photo eye, a motion sensor, a 150-watt LED light and an eight-watt LED light. After collecting data at both Pat's Food Center in Freeland and Freeland High School, the team discovered it had reduced energy consumption by 75%.

- **Third place:** From **Freeland High School**, Team Leader Eric Tyson and team members Brandon Svorinic, Matthew Boswell and Christopher Bell, also coached by Short, created a smartwatch application designed to prevent drowsy drivers from falling asleep at the wheel. Comparing the individual user's baseline heart rate to a predetermined percentage drop in heart rate to identify when the user has entered NREM – the stage of pre-sleep that includes grogginess or sleepiness – the app can alert the user of his or her unsafe driving status.

About the A.H. Nickless Innovation Award

The A.H. Nickless Innovation Award was created by the Nickless Family Charitable Foundation to honor the memory of the late Arthur H. Nickless, a local innovator and owner of Wolverine Telephone Company. With a goal of inspiring passion for science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), the competition is open to high school students in Bay, Midland, Saginaw and Tuscola counties and awards up to $77,500 per year in scholarships to students and STEM grants to schools. For more information, visit ahninnovationaward.com or facebook.com/AHNicklessInnovationAward.