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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**LOCAL STUDENTS, SCHOOLS WIN \$72K IN SCHOLARSHIPS, STEM GRANTS
IN FOURTH ANNUAL A.H. NICKLESS INNOVATION AWARD COMPETITION**

UNIVERSITY CENTER, MICH., April 24, 2017 – A total of 19 teams of students representing six local schools presented months of research and hard work over the weekend in an annual competition that promotes innovation and creative thinking among high school students in the Great Lakes Bay Region.

Following the finale event for the fourth annual [A.H. Nickless Innovation Award](#) competition – which took place April 22 at Saginaw Valley State University’s Alan W. Ott Auditorium – three teams of students went home with a total of \$37,000 in scholarships for themselves and \$35,000 in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) grants for their sponsoring schools. Each winning team also received a custom plaque.

Winning teams were:

- **First place:** Dow High Chargers, Herbert Henry Dow High School in Midland
Prizes: \$5,000 scholarship per team member and a \$20,000 STEM grant for the school
- **Second place:** Light Savers, Freeland High School
Prizes: \$2,500 scholarship per team member and a \$10,000 STEM grant for the school
- **Third place:** Sleep Watchers, Freeland High School
Prizes: \$1,000 scholarship per team member and a \$5,000 STEM grant for the school

Other schools represented in the top 19 teams included Bullock Creek High School (Midland), John Glenn High School (Bay City), Midland High School and the Saginaw Arts and Sciences Academy.

Additional information regarding the top three 2016-17 teams and their projects follows.



First place: Dow High Chargers

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.

“Our project seeks to prevent the abuse and misuse of prescription drugs by regulating the time and the state of mind under which these prescription drugs can be taken. Furthermore, while the safety of prescription drug users is our main purpose, we believe that the market demand for our product will be significant, as competing pharmaceutical companies or rehab facilities will be able to appear safer, and actually be safer, while using our product,” team members wrote in their project abstract. “Eventually, the end goal is to develop the technology to be consistent enough in function in order to be implemented as a law, first on a state, and then a federal scale.”

In addition to scholarships, grant and plaque, the team members took home a 3-D-printed traveling trophy to showcase at their school for the next year.

Second place: Light Savers

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: Sleep Watchers

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.