

## For young engineers, the future is green

### Ohio kids' model city wins contest

By Jeanette Der Bedrosian  
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WASHINGTON — Iceland's economy may be on the ropes, but a group of middle-school students still envisions an eco-inspired day when the nation has housing units with reusable water systems and rooftop fields for farming or recreation.

With their scale model of this futuristic vision for Iceland, the team of eighth-graders from Bexley Middle School in Bexley, Ohio, won the 17th Annual National Engineers Week Future City Competition. The event challenges schools around the country to apply engineering solutions to modern problems.

A panel of judges grilled 38 teams of middle-school engineers at the final judging Wednesday. Each group was assigned to use recycled materials and a budget of \$100 to build a model city that conserves, recycles and reuses water sources.

Abby Sharp, 14, part of the winning team, maintained a quiet demeanor even after winning.

"It's shock. And a little bit of sleep deprivation," Abby says.

Abby was joined by team members Tom Krajnak, 14, and Wyatt Peery, 13.

The team spent hours researching existing technologies — their least-favorite part of the competition, they said — before inventing realistic new technologies for their future city.

"Engineering is a terrific career choice for them, and we've helped them understand that," says Greg Bentley, CEO of Bentley Systems, an engineering software firm that sponsored the event.

The second place team was from St. Thomas More School in Baton Rouge. Placing third: St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School, South Miami.

The winning team receives a trip to U.S. Space Camp in Huntsville, Ala. The second- and third-place teams receive \$5,000 and \$2,000 scholarships, respectively, for their school's technology programs.

"We focused a lot on not only the research, but how they worked together as a team," says judge Allison Whatley, a nuclear surface warfare officer with the U.S. Navy. "This is, you can see, a massive task, to build a city from nothing."

