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MESA Center schools take top prizes

Students in Sacramento State’s MESA Center have been awarded both the 2012 grand prize and the second-place award for California in the Microsoft Blink Web Design Competition. The MESA schools are Franklin High School in the Elk Grove Unified School District (grand prize) and Grant High School in the Twin Rivers Unified School District (second place).

The MESA (Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement) program provides academic support to educationally disadvantaged students in elementary, middle and high school to help prepare them for admission into the California State University and University of California systems or other four-year colleges and universities.

More than 120 teams competed in the statewide contest. Sac State MESA director Jean Crowder said it is very rare for two schools from the same MESA center to nab the top prizes.

Franklin High’s Philson Wong (captain), Justin Hua, Kyle Kneeland and Sophia Yan won the grand prize in the 2012 California MESA Blink Competition for the Northern Region. Their teacher is Jerold Ash. The contest judges were impressed by their website’s creativity, innovation and general excellence.

The Twin Rivers team of Edward Ozeruga (captain) and Roman Pecherskiy finished second with their project, Wind Turbine Installers. Their teacher is Chris Mckinnon.

Both teams will receive from Microsoft an Xbox, Kinect and Kinect games. A Microsoft official said, “We hope you will consider pursuing college studies and a career in technology.”

The Blink competition challenged high school students to design and develop websites that align to the theme of “Imagine a better future for families, communities, and businesses made possible with technology and the skills and knowledge you have gained through MESA.”

Both schools received free subscriptions to the DreamSpark program, which provides schools with professional designer and developer software. Students were allowed to install the software onto their home computers at no charge.
For media assistance, contact Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156.

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