

Portola Valley, CA—Woodland School Destination Imagination teams advance to the state championships in Riverside, CA after sweeping success in the Silicon Valley regional tournament

On Saturday, March 5, three teams from Woodland School in Portola Valley, CA participated in the Silicon Valley regional Destination Imagination (DI) tournament held at Independence High School in San Jose. All three Woodland School teams advance to the DI State Championships in Riverside, CA on April 2, 2016, where top teams from across the state compete.

DI is an international, volunteer-led, educational non-profit organization that teaches 21st century skills to students in kindergarten through university level. Teams of students work collaboratively to come up with creative solutions in problem-solving challenges known as tournaments. During DI tournaments, teams of students compete against teams from other schools. During Saturday's tournament, students were asked to solve one of six open-ended challenges in the fields of STEM, fine arts and service learning and to present their solutions.

Two of the Woodland teams—the 6th-grade team “Your Mom’s Derpy Jelly Beans” and the 8th-grade team “S.P.A.N.K.E.D” —competed in the Improvisational Challenge, where they had to create and perform a four-minute improvisational presentation within a confined space of 6’x8’. Additionally, they had to weave other surprise elements into their skit just before the performance, such as a newsflash, a mysterious stranger, and a prop that they had to make with just a few minutes using only a newspaper. Woodland School’s 6th-grade team came in 2nd place in the improvisational challenge and its 8th-grade team came in 1st place.

A second 6th-grade team from Woodland School known as “Indigo B.A.R.N” competed in the Technical Challenge and came in 1st place in their category.

6th-grade student Truman Reynolds also participated in the DI tournament on an outside team known as “Trumoo Fox Skibi and a Bunny,” coached by his mother. Reynold’s team participated in the Structural Challenge and placed 1st in their category.

A breakdown of the Woodland School teams:

Team Name: Your Mom's Derpy Jelly Beans

Grade: 6

Challenge: Improvisational

Placed: 2nd in the improv challenge and 3rd in their category

Team Manager (Coach): Amy Shaw

Team Members: Brynn Brady, Trevor Kaskade, Kayla George, Stefan Minkowski, Riley Minkowski

Team Name: Indigo B.A.R.N. (an acronym for their names)

Grade 6:

Challenge: Technical

Placed: 1st in their category

Team Managers: Meena Tahiliani and Patrick McKee

Team Members: Brindha Ramanathan, Beatrice Rienhoff, Anja Linkwitz, Rohan Aggarwal, Nick McKee

Team Name: S.P.A.N.K.E.D. (an acronym for their names)

Grade: 8

Challenge: Improvisational

Placed: 1st in the improv challenge and 2nd in their category

Team Managers: Debbie Mattiello and Richard Mattiello

Team Members: Samik Mathur, Paige Briggs, Alexa Brown, Nate George, Kyle Lespade, Evan DiMarco, Dominic Mattiello (7 total)

Woodland School students participate in DI as an optional afterschool program and compete against teams from other schools during DI Tournaments. "For one school to place three teams in the state competition speaks volumes to the higher-level thinking these students engage in on a regular basis, both inside and outside the classroom," says Head of School John Ora. "They are positioning themselves for greater success by exercising the skills that are so critical today, including collaboration, creativity, and critical-thinking."

Woodland School is an Early Childhood through 8th-grade school located just west of Stanford in Portola Valley, CA.