

## **Woodland School in Portola Valley “Future Problem Solvers” Team Qualifies for State Competitions**

A team of four “Future Problem Solvers” from Woodland School in Portola Valley, CA, 4<sup>th</sup>-grade students Aneesh Tiwari and Cooper McCreary and 5<sup>th</sup>-grade students Grant Mackenzie and Sam Johnson, received their qualification notice on February 29<sup>th</sup> and will advance to the State competition along with 25 additional qualifying teams from 11 different schools across the state of California. The State competition will take place on April 16 and 17 in Laguna Niguel, CA, where the topic is “Recovering from a Natural Disaster.” If the students qualify, then they will head to the National competition June 1-5 at Michigan State University and investigate the topic “The Global Workplace.”

Teams are required to have four students participate and are divided into the following divisions: Junior (4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade), Middle (7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade) and Senior (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade). Woodland School’s qualifying team participated in the Junior Division against 81 additional teams from 13 schools. Teams researched topics in depth and explored their social, political, economic, and technological implications. Teams then brainstormed and explored the various challenges posed by each topic and completed the process by detailing and evaluating potential solutions. The team’s analysis and solutions were reviewed by a panel of evaluators who provided suggestions for improvement in addition to an overall score. To qualify for State, the team must receive a score of 75 or higher.

Woodland School students participate in Future Problem Solvers as an optional after school program. “Students participating in activities such as ‘Future Problem Solvers’ are positioning themselves and the world around them for greater success by exercising the skills that are so critical today,” says Head of School John Ora. “It’s important our students are able to think critically and creatively in addition to working collaboratively.”

Woodland School is a co-educational, non-denominational, independent day school in Portola Valley, serving over 268 students in early childhood through eighth grade, and their families. The mission of the school is to bring out the best in each child by providing a strong academic foundation and curriculum that fosters personal responsibility and kindness toward others. For more information, please visit the Woodland School website at [www.woodland-school.org](http://www.woodland-school.org).

Future Problem Solving (FPS) is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to “teaching students how to think, not what to think.” Designed for students in 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>-grade, “FPS combines the rigorous intellectual challenge of creative problem solving with an interdisciplinary study of the future. Students develop skills and their abilities in the areas of research, critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork,” according to their website. More information about California’s Future

Problem Solvers can be found on their website [www.cafps.org](http://www.cafps.org).

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