



# COMMUNITY PROJECTS



**What is Community Projects?** Community Projects is a team or individual activity in which students identify real problems in their school or community and implement real solutions. Students use the steps and skills of the problem solving process as they work on their project. However, since real life is not always as organized as an academic exercise, the process may not proceed neatly from step one through step six. Also, projects may not be completely wrapped up by the time they must be submitted. Some projects may even take more than one year.

**Why Community Projects?** Today's students will be running the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. What better way to prepare them than by teaching them to think systematically about problematic situations, gather information to understand the situation, and evaluate multiple solutions in order to best address the situation? Students involved in Community Projects learn very powerful lessons about creating change, dealing with local authorities and organizations, and about making an impact. The implementation of real solutions gives students a strong sense of accomplishment, and helps them to see the practical applications of the process and skills they have been learning.

**How do students participate in Community Projects?** Individuals or teams of any size may participate in three divisions: Junior (grades 4-6), Middle (grades 7-9), and Senior (grades 10-12). If a team qualifies for World Finals, a maximum of 15 students may participate in the competition there. Since Community Projects are long-term activities, students need to be committed to following through with the activities. Complex projects may take up to two years. Having a background in Global Issues is a great start for students in Community Projects, but it is not required. If they have not been involved with FPS, students do need to be taught the problem solving process as a part of their experience.

**How can I get started with my students?** Training in the problem solving process is important for coaches of Community Projects groups. Workshops can be provided at a time that works best for you. There are a variety of publications that can help coaches and teams with their projects. Our affiliate director will be happy to work with you to get started!

**How do I register for Community Projects?** Project information, fees, and entry forms can be found on our registration page. The entry fee is submitted along with the Project Proposal that is due in December. The final Project Report is due in February. Students may continue to work on their projects after the Project Report is submitted.

**How are Community Projects evaluated?** Community Projects are read by a state evaluator. The Project Proposal is evaluated in December and feedback is provided to the students for their continuation with the project. The Project Report is evaluated in March, and feedback is provided, as well as determination of the projects who qualify for the State Bowl in April. Winning projects will be eligible to attend the World Finals in June.

## Winning Project Summaries

### DRIVE

**2009 Senior Grand Champion  
Pecatonica High School  
Blanchardville, Wisconsin**

A survey showed that an alarming number of our high school students engaged in risky driving behavior. Our project DRIVE (Driving Responsibly In Vehicles Everywhere) aimed to increase driving safety in our student population. Events included a DRIVE Day with a speaker and activities that showed students how certain behaviors can affect one's ability to concentrate while driving. We also taught students at the elementary school the importance of being a good passenger and buckling up. Our final event involved more speakers and a mock accident staged with the help of local emergency services and law enforcement agencies.



### EXTREME MAKEOVER: PARK EDITION

**2008 Senior 2<sup>nd</sup> Place  
Luxemburg-Casco High School  
Luxemburg, Wisconsin**

To honor Luxemburg's Centennial, our team transformed our outdated, unsafe, and rarely-used village park into an inviting location for family recreation. We demolished old park equipment, spread two semi loads of mulch beneath new equipment, built ten children's picnic tables, painted recycling barrels, and constructed park benches and a project sign. We built a fire truck climbing toy, painted the older play equipment and the park shelter, and sealed/painted the basketball court. We obtained funding for new lighting and a security camera. In May, we encouraged public participation with our second "Music in the Park" event.



*See our registration page for project entry forms & information about fees.*