

Urbandale High School Students Achieve Over 20 Awards During Iowa Technology Expo

Urbandale High School students placed either first, second or third in their project category with one student finishing first place overall and awarded a scholarship during the 2016 Iowa Industrial Technology Exposition

URBANDALE, Iowa – June 3, 2016 – What do graphic communications, energy and power, transportation, material processing, problem solving, inventions and experiments, robotics and group collaboration represent? Not only do they encompass some of the most visionary and growth-oriented industry sectors, and represent fundamental skills for 21st century learners, but they are the challenging categories for which [Urbandale High School \(UHS\)](#) students competed with their award-winning projects during the 2016 Iowa Industrial Technology Exposition hosted at Southeast Polk High School. Participants from over 70 schools, community colleges, military organizations and businesses competed in the Expo on May 13, 2016. The Expo is widely considered the State Tournament of Industrial Technology with judges critiquing over 1,000 projects on display. Remarkably, 22 UHS students placed either first, second or third in their project category with UHS senior, Hank Puckett, finishing first place overall with his Teardrop Camper project and awarded a \$750 scholarship from the Rotary Club of East Polk County.



Urbandale High School senior, Hank Puckett, sitting on top of his Teardrop Camper project which earned him first place overall and a \$750 scholarship from the Rotary Club of East Polk County during the 2016 Iowa Industrial Technology Exposition. Photograph courtesy of Hank Puckett.

“The Teardrop Camper was a huge accomplishment for Hank and a highlight of our projects this year,” said UHS Industrial Technology Teacher Rachel Cicero. “He completed it largely on his own with very little advice and only a few extra hands when needed. His project was a great example of incorporating all areas of science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) knowledge in order to bring a project to life. His exceptional woodworking skills and willingness to step out of his comfort zone when assembling the trailer and wiring lights truly enhanced his project. Seeing Hank and all of my students continually

challenging themselves in all areas of STEAM in order to more effectively solve problems with new solutions is incredibly rewarding.”

Helping students move from theory into practice is a core focus of the UHS STEAM program. Knowing that students gain greater understanding and knowledge when deeply engaged in hands-on, applicable learning experiences is propelling the program forward with more students achieving greater results—both inside and outside the classroom. Participants in the Expo not only developed a mastery of design, engineering and production, but honed their skills in documenting their project for the judges. In addition to developing their innovative projects participants were required to document their procedure plans, processes employed, preliminary sketches, assembly drawings and bill of materials.

Over the past four years, Puckett has been a dedicated student in the UHS Industrial Technology department and after successfully completing all available woodworking courses he took three semesters of Independent Study. The Teardrop Camper was Puckett’s most ambitious project and was completed during open periods and before and after school.

“I think that the artistic aspect of STEM is overlooked,” said Puckett. “Once you have a base knowledge of all these different skills, you can combine them in a creative way to build something amazing. People like me who can't sing, dance, or draw need to find that creative outlet in something like STEAM.”

Creating a culture of learning that helps students identify, discover and grow into—not out of—their natural aptitudes and talents throughout their 13 years of primary and secondary education is at the core of the District’s aim of transforming education. Teachers and students are partners in their education with students having greater ownership and voice in their learning. Providing opportunities for students to excel in areas that capture their imagination and fuel their curiosity is building greater capacity for innovation and growth resulting in greater student achievement and success.

The Urbandale Community School District is thankful for the outstanding leadership of Cicero and congratulates these incredibly talented and exceptional students for their notable achievements during the 2016 Iowa Industrial Technology Exposition.

UHS 2016 Iowa Industrial Technology Exposition Results:

- Senior, Hank Puckett—Teardrop Camper—1st Place Overall; \$750 Scholarship from the Rotary Club of East Polk County
- Senior, Huntur Matthews—HHall Table—Silver Medal Division IV Floor, 1st Place
- Junior, Drake Henrichs—Redheart and Maple Longboard—Silver Medal Division III Table, 1st Place
- Junior, Rhea Gaskins—Tile Top Table—Division III Floor, 1st Place Nantucket Bench; Division IV Floor, 1st Place
- Sophomore, Zac Duncalf—Tile Top Table—Division III Floor, 1st Place
- Sophomore, Dominic DeCarlo—Classic Mantel Clock—Division III Table, 1st Place
- Sophomore, Ashton Willcox—Tile Top Table—Division III Floor, 1st Place
- Freshman, Hayden Friedrichsen—Mantel Clock—Division II Table, 1st Place
- Sophomore, Stephen Pieczynski—Tile Top Table—Division III Floor, 1st Place Nantucket Bench; Division IV Floor, 2nd Place
- Senior, Hunter St John—X End Coffee Table—Division III Floor, 2nd Place

- Senior, Kory Kane—Coat Rack—Division III Floor, 2nd Place
- Junior, Alex Weede—Nantucket Bench—Division III Floor, 2nd Place
- Junior, Henry Wortoc—Country Wall Shelf—Division III Floor, 2nd Place
- Sophomore, Gabe Heitert—Dining Table—Division IV Floor, 2nd Place
- Sophomore, Semir Sehic—Gathering Table—Division III Floor, 2nd Place Footboard Bench; Division IV Floor, 2nd Place
- Sophomore, Elvedin Bektic—Coat Rack—Division III Table, 2nd Place
- Sophomore, Adam Fraher—Six Candle Centerpiece—Division III Table, 2nd Place
- Sophomore, Luke Patzner—Six Candle Centerpiece—Division III Table, 2nd Place
- Freshman, Calvin Baethke—Coat Rack—Division II Table, 2nd Place
- Freshman, Taryn Robertson—Coat Rack—Division II Table, 2nd Place
- Sophomore, Tyriek Samuels—Lamp Table—Division III Floor, 3rd Place
- Freshman, Brad Januszewski—Picture Frame—Division II Table, 3rd Place

About Urbandale Community School District

The Urbandale Community School District includes portions of Des Moines and Urbandale, Iowa. The District serves over 3,900 students in six elementary schools, one middle school and one comprehensive high school. The Urbandale District supports an increasingly diverse student population where 51 languages are spoken. Building on the existing foundation of excellence in education, Urbandale is transforming education throughout the District. By implementing innovative [Quality/Continual Improvement](#) strategies that create learning environments that more fully engage, challenge and motivate students, Urbandale is taking transformation from theory into practice. Urbandale prepares students for becoming lifelong learners and is a school district that brings learning to life for everyone. To learn more, visit: UrbandaleSchools.com and follow on Twitter [@UrbandaleSchool](https://twitter.com/UrbandaleSchool).

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