

## 3 Bristol public school students reach National Invention Convention

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BRISTOL - Three students whose inventions earned them a spot at the National Invention Convention got to present their ideas to the Board of Education recently.

The Connecticut Invention Convention is a nonprofit organization designed to enhance creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills through invention, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Three local elementary students earned awards at the state convention and went on to attend the National Invention Convention and Entrepreneurship Expo in Dearborn, Michigan, recently.

Superintendent Susan Moreau said this year the school district's gifted coaches expanded the program to more local public schools than previously.

Alan Theriault, district gifted coordinator, said the Barnes Group and Liberty Bank provided the grant money to run the program at seven schools here and then hold a citywide convention. From there the winning students advanced to the regionals and then to the statewide convention, held this year at Gampel Pavilion on UConn's Storrs campus.

Three inventors advanced to the national finals: Jayden Colon and Aaron Burke, both fifth-graders at Ivy Drive Elementary School who worked with gifted coach Casey Reynolds, and Emily Walls, a fourth-grader from South Side Elementary school who worked with gifted coach Julia Darcy.

Jayden presented "The Lazy Man's Paint Brush." He explained, "the problem that my invention solves is that it's easy and quick on-the-go painting that helps utilize fine motor skills."

He demonstrated how various color paints are loaded into syringes attached to a paint brush, and the user can select which color he or she wants. Cleaning the brush with water between each color, he painted a simple picture of green grass, yellow sun, and black birds.

Emily's invention was the portable safety belt, for use on school buses.

Her parents explained that the few times Emily rode a school bus she was very nervous as she bounced around in her seat. She came up with the materials to make the seat belt, which the passenger can slide into a bus seat, and then take it with him or her on exiting the bus.



Bristol Superintendent of Schools Susan Moreau

Theriahult said Emily won a safety award at the state Invention Convention.

Aaron's invention is "The Anti-Theft Delivery Box."

"The problem I recognized was around Christmas time I saw a lot of news stories and surveillance footage of people stealing packages from the front steps," he said.

His solution was a secure box, which can be bolted down, and has a drop slot at the top to drop a package into, but which someone can't insert their hand into. To retrieve the package, you have to unlock the box.

"The trip to Michigan was quite expensive. All three of the students' families set up Go Fund Me pages," Moreau said. "They reached their totals so they could travel, as well getting as additional funding from the Bristol Board of Education Employees' Immediate Response Fund and the Men and Boys Immediate Response Fund, both at the Main Street Community Foundation."

She thanked "all of the donors who helped these students to go and have this amazing experience."

Bristol kindergartner Aviva Reisner won first place in her grade at the national convention for her invention, "The Loopy Hookeroo." However, she attends St. Joseph School.

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