



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Board of Education Honors U-46 Students for State Achievements

Students excelled at Future Problem Solving Bowl

ELGIN - The School District U-46 Board of Education Monday night honored eight students who earned first place in a statewide competition that encourages students to create meaningful connections between their classroom learning and real-world issues.

The Illinois Future Problem Solving Bowl was held in Bloomington-Normal in April. Each year's competition centers around a unique topic; for 2024, the topic was autonomous transportation.

Neda Bazys, currently a junior at Bartlett High School, placed first in the individual competition at the senior level. Zinnia Saher placed first in the individual competition at the middle level and was a member of the group that finished first in the team competition. She is currently a freshman at Bartlett High School but was an 8th grader at Larsen when she competed last spring.

In addition to Zinnia, the team winners in the middle division were two Larsen Middle School students - Andrew Punnoose and Sophia Lee, now freshmen at Elgin High School, and Ellis Middle School's Aiken Navarro, who is now a freshman at Streamwood High School.

The team competition at the senior level was won by Michelle Cardozo, now a sophomore at Elgin High School, and Nishi Sheth and Katelyn Wong, both sophomores at Bartlett High School.

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Following their success at the state level, the U-46 students advanced to the international competition held on the campus of Indiana University in June, where they tackled the topic of air quality.

The students were coached by Ellen Smith, a 4th grade gifted teacher who retired in June from Glenbrook Elementary School.

The Board of Education recognized the students with "Accent on Achievement" certificates during its meeting on Monday, Sept. 9.

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School District U-46 serves families in 11 communities: Bartlett, Elgin, Hanover Park, South Elgin, Streamwood and Wayne, as well as portions of Carol Stream, Hoffman Estates, St. Charles, Schaumburg, and West Chicago. In total, the District encompasses 90 square miles within the Fox River Valley, approximately 45 minutes west of downtown Chicago, and includes communities within Cook, DuPage and Kane counties. More than 34,000 preschoolers through 12th graders attend the 55 District schools and programs. To learn more, visit the U-46 [website](#), or like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).