

# Mount Douglas Secondary named top STEM school in provincial competition

Team of Grade 10 students wins first place overall and Best Engineering Design award

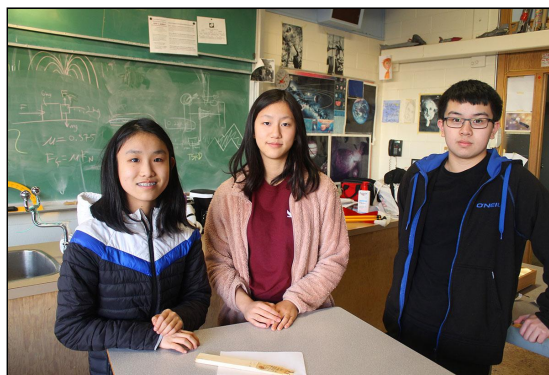
[SOPHIE HEIZER](#) / Dec. 10, 2019 4:30 p.m. / [LOCAL NEWS](#) / [NEWS](#)

A team of Grade 10 students from Mount Douglas Secondary school won Best Engineering Design and Top STEM School at a recent provincial Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) competition at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in Richmond on Dec. 1.

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The team won four out of five challenges in the competition on the way to winning Top STEM School. Mount Doug placed second in the science Jeopardy challenge and scored first place in maths, physics, geology, and engineering. They competed against 24 other schools.

Grade 10 students and teammates Emily Wang, Jasmine Zhang, and Eric Liu said the team didn't expect to win. "We knew that there were some really big STEM schools, especially in Vancouver," Wang said.



Emily Wang (left), Jasmine Chung (centre), and Eric Liu (right) helped their team take home a win from the provincial STEM competition held at Kwantlen Polytechnic University in Richmond on Saturday, December 1. (Sophie Heizer/News Staff)

“They were announcing the winners for fifth, fourth, third, second, the design challenge, and then first. We won the design challenge and were like ‘that’s good enough, we’re probably not going to win first place’ and then we won.”

“Because we did do pretty well in the challenges, most of us were expecting to get maybe around fifth or fourth,” Liu said.

The team said their sailboat was the fastest to cross a pond in the autonomous sailboat challenge, winning the team the engineering design award. The challenge was for teams to sail a boat as quickly as possible across a pond without touching it, which the team did in 3.5 seconds. The nearest competitor came in at 4.4 seconds.



The team of grade 10 provincial STEM competition winners with their teacher, Neal Johnson (back, third from right in the checked shirt), and the boat that won them an engineering design award. (Sophie Heizer/News Staff)

The team’s teacher and Maths, Science, and Challenge teacher at Mount Douglas Secondary, Neal Johnson, said the students went through months of intense practice on weekends and after school to prepare for the competition. Some of

his Grade 11 and 12 students who have previously gone through the competition helped mentor.

“They didn’t just win it by a little bit, they won it by a lot,” Johnson said, attributing it to that hard work. “I was really really happy for them because they had been working so

hard towards doing well in this competition. I was also proud of basically the whole school because the support starts with administration supporting these types of endeavors.”

“Our world has a few problems and it’s going to require people to be able to solve these problems. We’re giving these kids the vision and success early on to realize they can be people who solve the world’s biggest problems, whether those problems be environmental, medical, or other fields,” Johnson said.

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“It’s amazing what you can do when you get those types of students together and let them feed off each other. It’s an unbelievable, crazy amount of work but it is so, absolutely worth it when you see the end results.”

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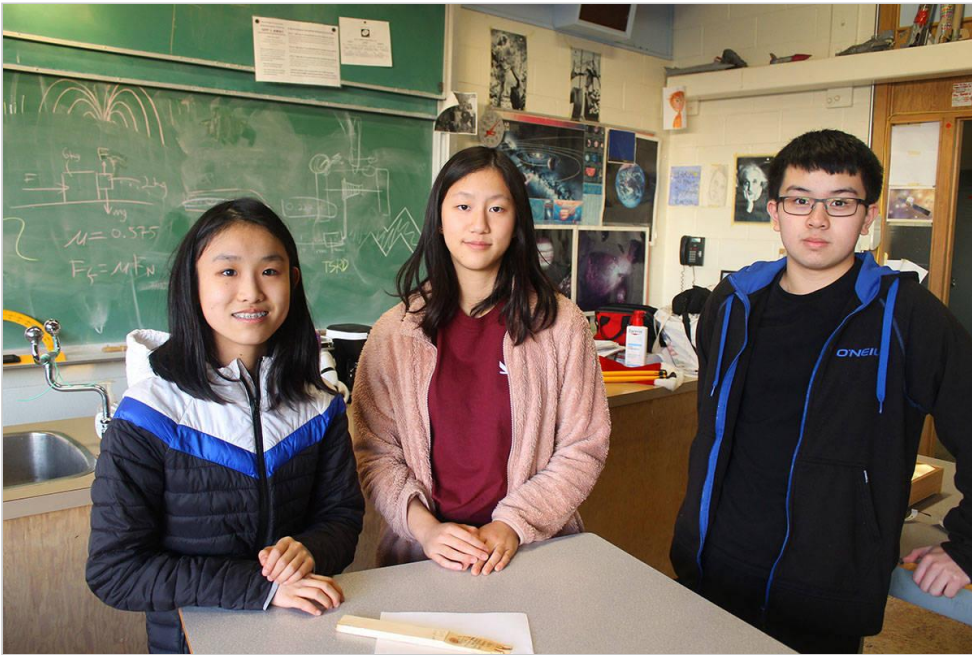
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