

**News Release**  
**Everett Public Schools**



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**Everett High students win International *Future Problem Solvers* competition**

Proposing a response to a global epidemic was the charge to teams competing in an International *Future Problem Solvers* competition in late May. The team of four Everett High School students competed with 64 championship teams from Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Great Britain, Canada and the United States. The Everett team won second place in both the academic competition and in the presentation of their "best solution" in a skit. An Australian team won first place in the academic competition.

The Everett team has won the Washington state senior division championship for three years in a row, winning the right to compete internationally and with the best teams from throughout the United States. The Everett team members are all juniors: Sam Capeloto, Renee Geck, Nora Gunning and Daniel Skubi. The team is coached by Rebecca Frevert who is Skubi's mother.

This year's problem involved developing a response to a water-borne pandemic originating in Africa. The Everett team developed a plan with multiple strategies to control the epidemic. In the hypothetical scenario to which they were responding, a Switzerland based pharmaceutical company had a patent on an effective treatment for the disease, but inadequate capacity to produce sufficient supplies to meet a rapidly expanding world-wide epidemic. The team's "best solution" was for the world's pharmaceutical companies to lend staff and support to the Swiss firm to enable it to rapidly expand production of the medication.

*Future Problem Solvers* teaches students to apply a sophisticated approach to the analysis of complex problems, the generation of potential solutions, and the identification of the best approach. Each year they apply the principles to a selected subject, requiring weeks of research before a competition. Previous events focused on third world debt and child labor. Team member Dan Skubi says that *Future Problem Solvers* has expanded his understanding of world problems as the team has researched topics before each competition. This year's topic of pandemics was selected over a year ago. It was remarkably prescient, given the current spread of H1N1 flu virus around the world in the last few weeks.

The team has been competing together since first being introduced to *Future Problem Solvers* at North Middle School. They look forward to competing together once more as high school seniors at the International competition next year.

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(article written by Des Skubi)