

Winning Entries Announced in Smithsonian–Cricket Media’s 8th Annual Spark!Lab Dr. InBae Yoon Invent It Challenge

More than 564 Students, through individual and team entries, submitted pioneering inventions to help improve and enhance the lives of older adults.

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, May 24, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Aging affects people’s ability to stay socially

engaged, mentally and physically active, and complete everyday tasks, but if the highly original concepts and inventions proposed by students around the globe as part of the 8th Annual Spark!Lab Dr. InBae Yoon Invent It Challenge are any indicator, help is on its way. Cricket Media, in partnership with the Smithsonian’s Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation, is pleased to announce the winners of this year’s challenge, which received more than 250 entries from across U.S., South America, Asia, and Europe.

“

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Sharon Klotz, Head of Invention Education, Lemelson Center

The challenge asked students ages 5–18 to think about a real-world way to help older adults and to devise new, ground-breaking inventions to achieve these goals. For their entries, students were required to follow a seven-step invention process, including identifying a problem, conducting research, sketching their ideas, building a prototype, testing the product, refining it, and marketing it to potential users. The eight winners—four individuals and four teams—and 20 honorable mentions were evaluated by a panel of judges from the Smithsonian, AARP, and

Cricket Media.

“[Older adults] love to garden ... gardening is good for relaxing, exercising, combating loneliness, and spending time with the family or the community,” say 15-year-old Delaney and Makenzie, inventors of the “Pop Up Planter.” This hydraulic-powered garden bed helps those with limited mobility improve physical, social, and mental health. Addressing the issue of decreased food consumption due to age or medical conditions such as strokes, 11-year-old Ravindu’s Temp Plate is meant to help older adults – who tend to eat more slowly than others – with a means to keep their food warm. Virtual Me, created by 10-year-old Kavi, is an innovative robotic technology that integrates artificial intelligence, virtual reality and augmented reality technology to help older people who live apart from family members to get the emotional support and personal connection they need.

The winners of the team 5–7 age category built Pop Out Stairs, a multipurpose cane that contains a set of foldable stairs, to enable older adults to “feel safe when reaching things up high.” Sophia, winner of the individual 14–21 age category, invented The Helping Hand, a device that helps older adults with arthritis maintain proper oral hygiene. People can slip their hand



Spark!Lab Dr. InBae Yoon
2019 Invent It Challenge

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into a glove that is fitted with various tools for brushing, cleaning, and flossing their teeth, eliminating the need to grip toothbrushes or small pieces of floss.

This year, the two amazing inventions that won the ePals Choice Award, with both receiving tens of thousands of online votes, are the “FIG” created by a team of 11- to 13-year-olds and “The Crow” created by a team of 8-10-year-olds. The “FIG” provides older adults with an easy way to garden indoors and “The Crow” assists older adults in picking up objects off the ground while also serving as a safety light.

“These young inventors have taken the time to research and understand the complexities of aging and have devised brilliant inventions to assist and empower the aging population,” says Laura Woodside, Vice President of Education Products at Cricket Media. “We are proud to showcase their inventions on our global platform. Their work is evidence of their innovative thinking, impressive creativity and their admirable desire to improve the quality life for all.”

“The winning entries reflected not only innovative ideas but also the inventive process.” says Sharon Klotz, Head of Invention Education for the Smithsonian’s Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation. “In fact, the process skills – iterative design, collaboration, prototyping, tweaking based on feedback – are lifelong skills applicable in any context. This group of winners, the honorable mentions, and all the submittals reflect Dr. Yoon’s legacy and vision, including his idea that ‘invention is a state of mind.’

Complete List of Individual Winners, by Age:

- Ages 5–7: The Tomato Picker– Brendan D. (Virginia)
- Ages 8–10: Virtual Me – Kavi S. (California)
- Ages 11–13: Temp Plate – Ravindu K. (Connecticut)
- Ages 14+: The Helping Hand – Sophia I. (Missouri)

Complete List of Team Winners, by Age:

- Team Ages 5–7: The Pop Out Stairs (New York)
- Team Ages 8–10: The Crow (New York)
- Team Ages 11–13: Fig (New Jersey)
- Team Ages 14+: Pop Up Planter (Missouri)

Videos and other details of the top winning inventions and honorable mentions are [available here](#). Age-specific prizes available to the winners include a hands-on behind-the-scenes tour of Smithsonian museums in Washington D.C. that includes consultation with representatives from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, among many other prizes. Honorable mentions will receive a one-year digital subscriptions to any Cricket Media magazine.

ABOUT THE YOON FAMILY The Spark!Lab Dr. InBae Yoon Invent It Challenge is a collaboration between the Smithsonian’s Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation and Cricket Media. The challenge is named in honor of Dr. InBae Yoon, a Korean American inventor who passionately believed that everyone is inventive. His lifelong commitment to drawing, tinkering, and prototyping his ideas resulted in over 200 U.S. patents. The Spark!Lab Dr. InBae Yoon Invent It Challenge celebrates his legacy as an inventor and educator and aims to inspire the next generation of innovators.

ABOUT CRICKET MEDIA Cricket Media® is a global education company creating high-quality print and multimedia products for children, families, mentors, teachers, and partners that improve learning opportunities for everyone. Led by our 11 award-winning children’s magazines and our customizable research-tested collaborative learning platform, we are committed to creating and supporting innovative learning experiences that help children safely explore and engage with their expanding world.

ABOUT SPARK!LAB Spark!Lab is a hands-on invention activity space operated by the Jerome and Dorothy Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History. The Lemelson Center engages, educates, and empowers

the public to participate in technological, economic, and social change. Through historical research, educational initiatives, exhibitions, and public programming, the Center advances new perspectives on invention and innovation and fosters interactions between the public and inventors.

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