

Resolution No. 26-07-014

SPONSORED BY: Commissioners Dyran Bledsoe and Mike Akard

A PROCLAMATION OF THE BLOUNT COUNTY COMMISSION HONORING THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE COMPETITION

WHEREAS, the Blount County Commission recognizes the importance of innovation, education, and the advancement of science and technology through the achievements of our students; and

WHEREAS, four exceptional students from Blount County who attend Alcoa Intermediate School—Emma Connor, Ryker Cochran, Aaron Gallagher, and Ayden Taverna—represented our community with distinction in the Presidential Artificial Intelligence Competition, sponsored by the First Lady of the United States; and

WHEREAS, more than 20,000 students and 2,500 teams from across the nation submitted entries to the competition, making this one of the most competitive student innovation events in the country; and

WHEREAS, the Blount County team advanced to the Final 40, then to the Final 5 in their competition track before ultimately earning the title of National Champions in Track 1 (Elementary Division); and

WHEREAS, the competition challenged students to identify a real-world problem affecting their communities and develop an innovative solution utilizing artificial intelligence; and

WHEREAS, the students designed an AI-powered application concept featuring two important functions:

- An educational assistant that helps students work through homework assignments by providing guiding questions and critical-thinking prompts rather than simply supplying answers; and
- A time management tool that helps students develop responsibility by reminding them when to begin assignments in order to complete them on time; and

WHEREAS, the team's innovative concept demonstrates not only technical creativity but also a commitment to improving education, encouraging independent learning, and promoting student success; and

WHEREAS, the team presented their project on June 8 at the historic Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium before receiving the National Championship Award on June 9 from the First Lady during a ceremony at the White House, followed by a celebration in the White House Rose Garden; and

WHEREAS, the students were guided and inspired by their dedicated teacher sponsors, Hope McDonald, Michael Baumann, and Dr. Emily Holtz, whose leadership and mentorship helped cultivate this remarkable accomplishment; and

WHEREAS, the team has continued its efforts by applying for a \$50,000 grant to fully develop their application so that it may benefit students beyond this competition;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Blount County Commission that it hereby congratulates and honors:

- Emma Connor
- Ryker Cochran
- Aaron Gallagher
- Ayden Taverna

for being named National Champions in Track 1 (Elementary Division) of the Presidential Artificial Intelligence Competition.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Blount County Commission expresses its sincere appreciation to Hope McDonald, Michael Baumann, and Dr. Emily Holtz for their dedication to fostering innovation, academic excellence, and leadership among the youth of Blount County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Blount County Commission commends these students for demonstrating that the future of innovation is bright and that Blount County's young people are capable of competing—and succeeding—on the national stage.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Commission shall spread this Resolution upon the official minutes of the Blount County Commission and provide suitably prepared copies to the students, their teacher sponsors, and their school in recognition of this extraordinary accomplishment.

CERTIFICATION OF ACTION

ATTEST

Commission Chairman

County Clerk

County Mayor

Date

- Approved
- Vetoed