

WPHS Wins State Environmental Science (Envirothon) Competition for the Second Straight Year

On April 25-26, Woodland Park High School sent 2 teams of 5 students each to compete at the Arapahoe County Fair Grounds in the state Environmental Science competition.

Out of 10 teams, the two WPHS teams placed first and second.

In addition, out of the 6 categories in the competition (Soils, Aquatics, Forestry, Wildlife, Agriculture, and oral presentation), WPHS had the highest score in each category

The winning team consisted of MacKenzie Morrison (Senior), Angelica Osuch (Senior), Hunter Stone (Senior), Cameron Vela (Sophomore), and Laura Wagner (Senior). This winning team will represent the state of Colorado in Maryland for the North American Environmental Science competition this July.

The second place team consisted of Eric Blackwell (Senior), Emily Hopfe (Junior), Samantha Lecky (Junior), Dakota Locklear (Senior), and Megan Ross (Senior).

Individual recognitions include MacKenzie Morrison placing first in the category of Aquatics, Angelica Osuch placing first in the category of Wildlife, Hunter Stone placing first in the category of Forestry, Cameron Vela placing first in the category of Agriculture, and Laura Wagner placing first in the category of Soils. Other noteworthy performances included Dakota Locklear earning second place in Soils, Erick Blackwell earning third place in Wildlife, Megan Ross earning third place in Forestry, Samantha Lecky earning third place in Agriculture, and Emily Hopfe tying for third place in Aquatics.

All students come from WPHS's AP Environmental Science class taught by Mr Dan Ganoza. Mr Ganoza is a third year teacher at WPHS. He is an AF Academy graduate with 22 years' service in the Air Force before joining the teaching staff at WPHS two years ago. He was one of the two coaches to the Woodland Park teams.

The second coach is Rose Banzhaf. She resides in Woodland Park and has no affiliation with the school other than her love for Environmental Science—she shares that passion with various projects at WPHS, WPMS, and two of three district elementary schools. She recently moved here from Texas where she was involved with their equivalent Texas state competition. It was through her inspiration that WPHS formed their teams and she was responsible for scheduling over a dozen guest speakers from all over Colorado to talk to the WPHS teams about different environmental topics. WPHS is lucky to have advocates in the community like Rose who tirelessly lend their expertise to our students.

Another major community supporter of these two WPHS teams is Marisa Neuzil, District Manager for the Teller-Park Conservation District part of the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts. Her agency sponsored WPHS for this event allowing all students to participate free of cost to them. Without her financial backing and moral support WPHS would not have participated in this event.

All 10 WPHS students who participated in this competition earned their spot on their team by spending two Saturdays a month, for the last few months, at optional "Saturday Seminars" reviewing current environmental science topics. This does not include the countless hours of self-study each team member conducted on their own.

This is the second year in a row that Woodland Park High School has won this competition. Last year Woodland Park represented the state of Colorado at the North American competition in Ontario, Canada.



All WPHS Participants!



The winning team!

