

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields are of critical importance to the West Tennessee region. The economy of the region is largely dependent on industry, advances, and a skilled workforce in STEM. The West Tennessee STEM Hub in partnership with Buckman is hosting the sixth annual West Tennessee STEM Essay competition for all regional middle and high school students. The competition will provide a forum for students to share the impact of STEM on their lives and community, and it will promote greater regional awareness of the need for more students to pursue STEM professions.

WHO — All West TN region middle school and high school students living in one of the following counties: Benton, Carroll, Chester, Crockett, Decatur, Dyer, Fayette, Gibson, Hardeman, Hardin, Haywood, Henderson, Henry, Lake, Lauderdale, Madison, McNairy, Obion, Shelby, Tipton, Weakley. There are separate brackets for middle and high school students. Middle school includes grades 6, 7, and 8; high school includes grades 9 through 12.

WHAT — Prepare and submit a 1,200 – 1,500 word essay on the following topic: **Urban Ecology**

Your essay should focus on innovations in Urban Ecology. The essay should also provide a compelling argument as to why a focus on how protecting cities and other densely populated areas is important. What do you think is the best strategy for the future? Share your STEM knowledge!

Students should relate the topic to their personal experience in addition to providing evidence from research to support their statements. Participants should pay special attention to the rubric that is included in this announcement, as it will be used by judges in scoring the essays.

WHEN — Essays must be submitted via email no later than 5:00 pm CST on Monday, May 1, 2023 to the following survey: https://memphistheatreanddance.formstack.com/forms/buckman_stem_essay_competition_submission. The winners will be announced on Wednesday, May 20th.

WHY — In addition to raising awareness of the impact of STEM across West TN, all winning entries will be published on a special page of the West Tennessee STEM Hub website, www.westtnstem.org. Award categories are as follows:

MIDDLE SCHOOL COMPETITION

1ST PLACE - \$300

2ND PLACE - \$200

3RD PLACE - \$100

HIGH SCHOOL COMPETITION

1ST PLACE - \$300

2ND PLACE - \$200

3RD PLACE - \$100

*Prize money will be awarded to the school to support STEM activities in the winning classroom.
Winning students will receive an engraved plaque.

| CRITERIA | MAX POINTS |
|---|-------------------|
| <p>COVER PAGE* INCLUDES: ESSAY TITLE (NOT THE SAME AS THE ESSAY PROMT) STUDENT'S NAME STUDENT'S GRADE NAME OF SCHOOL COUNTY DATE WORD COUNT *SEE ATTACHED FOR TEMPLATE</p> | 10 |
| <p>ESSAY IS WITHIN 1,200 - 1,500 WORD LIMIT</p> | 10 |
| <p>ESSAY IS WRITTEN IN A CLEAR AND COHERENT MANNER, WITH A THESIS STATEMENT GUIDING THE CONTENT</p> | 20 |
| <p>CONTENT CLEARLY EXPLAINS THE TREND, ADVANCEMENT OR INNOVATIONS AND WHERE IT IS CURRENTLY APPLICABLE</p> | 20 |
| <p>AT LEAST THREE EXAMPLES FROM RESEARCH ARE PROVIDED TO SUPPORT THE THESIS STATEMENT</p> | 15 |
| <p>SOURCES OF RESEARCH ARE PROPERLY CITED WITHIN THE ESSAY IN MLA FORMAT</p> | 10 |
| <p>ESSAY CLEARLY OUTLINES THE IMPORTANCE OF STEM INNOVATIONS IN SOLVING WATER CONSERVATION CHALLENGES</p> | 15 |