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Energize Connecticut Announces 12th Annual *eesmarts*TM Statewide Student Contest

Contest expanded to include college category and a separate Grade 12 category

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. (January 11, 2016) – Eversource and The United Illuminating Company, as partners of the Energize Connecticut initiative, are now accepting entries for the 12th annual *eesmarts* Student Contest. The contest encourages students to demonstrate their knowledge of energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainability by completing grade-specific assignments. The deadline for entries is April 1, 2016.

The *eesmarts* Student Contest is open to Connecticut students in Grades K-12. Additionally, new to the program this year is a college level playwright category entitled “Wright the World,” and a new separate 12th grade category. Finalists in all categories and grade levels will be honored at a special awards ceremony on April 29, 2016 at the State Capitol in Hartford.

“Over the past 11 years, we have encouraged students across the state to demonstrate their understanding of smart energy with creativity and to develop sustainable solutions that help our environment,” said Bill Dornbos, Chairperson of the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Board and also with the Acadia Center. “We are excited to be able to expand the contest this year to include college students.”

The new “Wright the World” category invites college students, enrolled in a two or four year college or university in Connecticut, to write a 25-30 minute play that supports the *eesmarts* curriculum and mission. The play should be written for a young audience, preferably Grades K-5. It must explain how energy is made, identify energy resources, clarify what it means to be energy-efficient and sustainable, and provide examples of energy-efficient technology. The winner of this category will receive \$500 and have the opportunity to cast and perform the play during the 2016-2017 academic year at schools and/or educational centers across Connecticut.

Students in Grade 12 will compete in a new category that challenges them to create a persuasive image that advocates for energy conservation, an alternate energy source, or an environmental concern, and showcases their knowledge of this subject area. Entries, which can be a short poem, cartoon or 30-second video, will be evaluated based on scientific validity, and concise and convincing imagery.

Students in Grades 9-11 compete in the community service-learning project award category, which asks students to propose a community-based project to address an energy-related issue. Students may work in groups of five members or less in this category and winners’ schools will receive *eesmarts* program funding of \$1,500 for first place, \$1,000 for second place and \$500 for third place to make their proposed project a reality during the next school year.

Students in grades K-8 answer grade-level specific prompts in the form of a poster (Grades K-2), narrative (Grade 3), news article (Grade 4), book review (Grade 5), essay (Grade 6), speech (Grade 7), or public service announcement (Grade 8).

For grade levels K-12, first prize winners will also receive a \$200 Amazon Gift Card, second prize winners a \$100 Amazon Gift Card, and third prize winners a \$50 Amazon Gift Card.

For more information about the contest, please visit www.eesmarts.com/contest.

About Energize Connecticut

Energize Connecticut helps you save money and use clean energy. It is an initiative of the Energy Efficiency Fund, the Connecticut Green Bank, the State, and your local electric and gas utilities, with funding from a charge on customer energy bills. Information on energy-saving programs can be found at EnergizeCT.com or by calling 1.877.WISE.USE.

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