



Arkansas Department of Education

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Winners of Second Annual Great Arkansas History Video Game Coding Competition Announced

LITTLE ROCK — The Arkansas Department of Education's Office of Computer Science is pleased to announce the winners of the Second Annual Great Arkansas History Video Game Coding Competition. Hellstern Middle School (Springdale School District) received the top prize, with Arkansas Arts Academy in Rogers taking home second place and third place honors.

The competition was open to all Arkansas students in grades four through eight. By emphasizing storytelling, state history, and coding, this competition allowed students to demonstrate their coding abilities, while supporting literary growth and expanding their knowledge of Arkansas history. The theme for this year's contest was the "Old Gray Lady" and her influential role in Arkansas history.

"The Old Gray Lady," a moniker for the *Arkansas Gazette*, first went to press in 1819, 17 years before statehood was granted. Its run lasted 172 years, finally closing its doors in 1991 as the self-described longest-continuous-run newspaper west of the Mississippi River. "The Old Gray Lady" had several editors who influenced Arkansas history, from solidifying the spelling of the state name to influencing political opinions on electoral appointments and racial tolerance.

"I am very happy to see that the *Arkansas Gazette*, which was so important in the founding and history of our state, will continue to live on for future generations through these students' entries in the Great Arkansas History Video Game Coding Competition," said Dr. Donna Lampkin Stephens, director of the School of Communication at the University of Central Arkansas at Conway. "I commend not only the students who won the competition but also all those who participated."

Hellstern Middle School of the Springdale School District won the competition for the second year in a row. This year Casey Elliott, Chris Arrue-Martinez, Elijah Reed, Eurel Roman, Reece Stephens, and Will Gladden produced the winning submission. Jamie Walker served as the teacher advisor for the team. These students will each receive a \$1,000 award, in addition to a \$2,500 award for the school. Their submission is playable here: <https://flowlab.io/game/play/1555013>.

Two single student teams, both sponsored by Mai Le from Arkansas Arts Academy in Rogers, won the second and third place prizes. The students, Corissa Arnold (second place) and Britton Dixon (third place), will each receive a #CSforAR prize kit.

Students who participated this year will receive a Circuit Playground Express coding device. This contest will start anew this fall with a brand new topic and provide Arkansas middle schools a new opportunity to compete. For more information, please visit <http://bit.ly/ARCSHistComp>.

Arkansas is recognized nationally and internationally as leading the computer science education movement through Governor Asa Hutchinson's #CSforAR / #ARKidsCanCode initiative. To learn more, visit <http://bit.ly/ARKidsCanCode>.

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