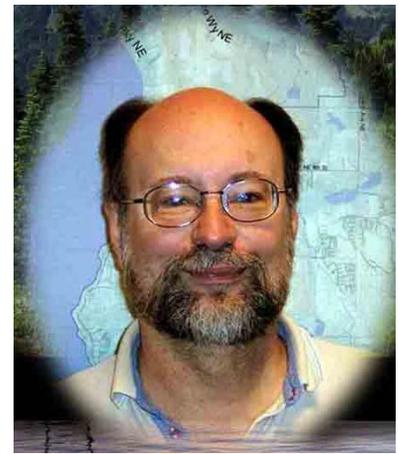2014 Washington GIS Conference

Communicating Our World

May 12 - 14 , 2014
Greater Tacoma
Convention & Trade Center

Frequently Asked Questions
for the 8th Annual
Richard 'Dick' Thomas
Memorial
Student Presentation
Competition &
Award
May 14, 2014

Dick Thomas 1947 – 2006

About the Student Presentation Competition & Award

Prizes

Abstracts

Answers:
About the Student Presentation Competition & Award

What is the Richard 'Dick' Thomas Memorial Student Presentation Competition & Award?

WAURISA, the Washington State Chapter of the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association, announces the 8th Annual Richard 'Dick' Thomas Memorial Student Presentation Competition & Award. This award was established in 2006 to honor Washington State GIS pioneer and mentor Richard 'Dick' Thomas.

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What is the intent of the Dick Thomas Competition?

The intent of this award is to honor Dick by continuing his work of encouraging students to excel in their studies and transition successfully into careers in the field of GIS.

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What is the objective of the Dick Thomas Competition?

WAURISA's objective is to inspire students to present their original work related to GIS, geography, or geographic research at the annual Washington GIS Conference.

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How many parts does the competition have?

The competition has two parts. The first part is the selection of at least four (4) abstracts by the Dick Thomas Competition Committee and the second is for the authors of those abstracts to present their work as detailed in the abstract at the 2014 Conference.

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Who can enter?

Current students enrolled at least 6 hours in a relevant curriculum at a Washington State secondary school, community college, technical school, or university program, or current Washington residents enrolled at least 6 hours in a relevant online GIS program can enter.

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Who is the contact presenter?

The main presenter is the contact presenter. This is the individual with whom the Competition Committee will correspond and to whom all prizes will be awarded.

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Can multiple presenters participate?

Multiple presenters or co-presenters are welcome to present. However, the contact presenter is expected to do the majority of the presentation.

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How many presenters can be in a group?

Presentation groups can have no more than three presenters.

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Should projects be the students' original work?

Entries must be the original work by the students.

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Can the project be a school project or supervised by the students' advisor or professor?

Entries must be conducted as a school project or under the supervision of a student advisor or professor.

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What academic program can the students be enrolled in?

Students must be enrolled in a GIS, geography, technology, or related academic program at a Washington state technical college, college, university or online degree program.

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Can students enrolled in an online degree program enter?

Washington state residents enrolled in an online geospatial degree program may enter the competition.

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What should projects relate to?

Projects should relate to geography, GIS, or allied technologies.

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What subjects should projects apply to?

Projects should apply to a social, natural resource, business, government, or similar subject.

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What topics can be entered?

Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:
- Archaeology
- Environmental issues
- Natural resource issues
- Public health
- Social services
- Public safety
- Recreation
- Remote sensing
- Stormwater
- Transportation, or
- Surprise us!

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What must entries include?

All submitted entries must include:

1. An abstract describing the project using a maximum of 300 words that describes the proposed presentation;
2. And, after an invitation to present at the 2014 Conference is tendered, a letter from the students' professor or faculty advisor verifying the student's status and hours of enrollment on institutional letterhead is required. The letter can be faxed or sent as an e-mail attachment.
3. On the day of the presentation, a PDF of the presentation slides must be given to Sarah Myers, Dick Thomas Award Coordinator, to be included on WAURISA's web site.

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Prizes

What are the prizes for the Dick Thomas Competition?

First Place
- Dick Thomas Award Plaque
- $1000
- One year membership in WAURISA
- Free registration to the 2015 Washington GIS Conference
- Publication of paper in *The Summit* (Washington GIS Newsletter)
- Plus, possible additional prizes

Second Place
- Dick Thomas Second Place Award Certificate
- $300
- One year membership in WAURISA
- Publication of paper in *The Summit* (Washington GIS Newsletter)
- Plus, possible additional prize

Third Place
- Dick Thomas Third Place Award Certificate
- $200
- One year membership in WAURISA
- Publication of paper in *The Summit* (Washington GIS Newsletter)
- Plus, possible additional prizes

Honorable Mention
- Dick Thomas Third Place Award Certificate
- Publication of paper in *The Summit* (Washington GIS Newsletter)
- Plus, possible additional prizes

Is there a prize for the advisor or professor of the first place winner?

This year we are continuing the cash award given to the advisor or professor of the first place winner. This year's prize is $250.

How are prizes distributed to group members?

In the case of an award going to a presentation with multiple presenters, the award will be given to the contact presenter, who will be responsible for distributing the prize equitably among the co-presenters. WAURISA will not involve itself in the distribution of awards among groups of student presenters.

Will presenters earn points toward their GISPs?

Student presenters will earn 1 GISCI Contribution Point for Conference Presentation in addition to points earned for attending the 2014 Conference.

Abstracts

How will abstracts be chosen to present at the competition?

The Dick Thomas Competition Committee will judge all presentation abstracts, and select those that will be presented on Wednesday during the Conference. The Committee retains the prerogative to choose more than 4 abstracts to be presented at the Conference. The Competition winners will be announced during the Closing Session of the Conference. All Committee decisions are final.

What information will I need to provide to submit my abstract?

The website will ask you for the following:
- Contact Presenter:
- Co-Presenter1:
- Co-Presenter2:
- School & Department name:
- Student Advisor/Professor's name:
- E-mail address of Contact Presenter:
- Mailing address:
- City, WA:
- Zip:
- Phone number:
- Presentation Title:
- Abstract (300 word max):
- User level your presentation will appeal to: New, Intermediate, Advanced
- Message or special instructions for abstract reviewers (200 word max):

Are there any words of wisdom on how to improve my abstract?

The abstract must be no more than 300 words. It needs to be succinct, descriptive and answer the following questions: What is your project? Where is your project? Why did you do this project? Who will benefit from this project?

Be certain to have your professor/advisor review the abstract and in the case of a team presentation, have your co-presenters review the abstract.

What is the deadline to submit abstracts?
Deadline to submit abstracts: **Wednesday, April 11, 2014**
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Who will review the abstracts?
The WAURISA Student Presentation Competition Committee will review submitted abstracts.
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When will entrants be notified of their acceptance to present at the Conference?
The Committee will notify all entrants of their status by **Wednesday, April 30, 2014**.
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Where can I submit my abstract?
Abstract are submitted online. The website will be available in January.
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Registration

Must all presenters register for the Conference in order to present their work?
Yes, all presenters must register for Conference to present their work at the Conference.
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How do presenters register for the Conference?
The contact presenter from each selected paper and group members, up to 3, will receive a 1-day pass to the **2014 Washington GIS Conference** for Wednesday, May 14th. Students will be given a special code to register after acceptance of the abstract.
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Can student advisors or professors attend the presentations?
Yes, we are offering a limited number 1-day passes for student advisors/professors interested in attending Wednesday only. These are on a first come basis. Advisors/professors interested in registering for Wednesday only, need to contact Sarah Myers.
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Can non-Conference attendees come to the presentations?
Non-Conference attendees can come to see you speak. However, due to costs to WAURISA, they cannot participate in the lunch or coffee breaks. Please Contact Sarah Myers to arrange this.
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The presentation session

When will students present their papers at the 2014 Washington GIS Conference?
Presentation of Selected Papers: **Wednesday, May 14, 2014**
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How long is the presentation session?
Presentations will be made at the Conference in at least one 90 minute session. Presenters should plan on 15 minutes for their presentation plus additional 5 minutes for set up, take down and audience questions.
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Will a laptop and projector be available?
A laptop with a PC Projector will be available.
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[Will internet access be available?](#)

Internet access in the presentation room may be available, but is not guaranteed.

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[Do I need to bring a PDF copy of my presentation to the presentation session?](#)

Yes. Please bring a copy of your presentation in PDF format for publication on the WAURISA web site after the Conference.

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[Are there any words of wisdom on how to improve my presentation?](#)

There are a few things you can do to make your presentation as professional as possible. When using PowerPoint, limit the number of bullets to 6 or fewer, and keep the number of words to a minimum. Use large fonts that can be seen from the back of the audience.

Rather than reading verbatim from the screen, expound from an outline. Illustrations and maps spice up a presentation, but do not go overboard on animation and sound effects. At the beginning of your presentation, state what your talk will cover, and at the end do a review of what was covered. Allow time for questions from the audience. Repeat questions for the audience before answering.

Practice the presentation with a test audience using a projector. Speak in a voice that projects well, stand up straight, and make eye contact with different individuals in the audience. If possible, step out from behind the podium, which can make you seem more approachable and personable.

There will be projectors in the presentation rooms. Some applications work differently with a projector. Plan to come to the Conference session early to verify that your presentation works correctly with the projector. Copy a backup presentation onto a CD and thumb drive. If bringing handouts, make sufficient copies and provide internet links to the information.

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Judging Criteria

[What are the criteria used to judge the Competition?](#)

Abstracts and presentations will be judged on the following criteria:

- Demonstration of expertise and understanding of geographic concepts
- Demonstration of expertise and understanding of GIS, related technology, and its application
- Explanation of how the work presented relates to the topic and contributes to greater understanding or knowledge of the topic and GIS
- Demonstration of innovative approach and/or critical thinking
- Quality of written abstract
- Quality of public presentation

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Previous winners

[Where can I find the abstracts of previous years' winners?](#)

Abstracts can be found in old PRESENTATION SESSION reports in previous issues of *The Summit*.

2013 - [Summer](#)
2012 – [Summer](#)
2011 – [Autumn](#)
2011 – [Winter](#)
2009 - [Summer](#)
2008 – [Summer](#)
2007 – [Summer](#)
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[Where can I find the papers of previous years' winners?](#)

2013 – [Christopher Wright](#) – University of Washington Bothell

2012 - [Renee Vandermause and Marshall Kosaka](#) - Seattle University

2011 - [Kristan Blackhart and Jon Medlin](#) - University of Washington

2010 - [Stephan Gmur](#) - University of Washington

2009 - [Jessica Larson](#) - Green River College

2008 - [Joowon Park](#) - College of Forest Resources at University of Washington

2007 - [Mike Westra](#) - University of Washington GIS Certificate Program

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