



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Fayette Business Education Partnership Hosts Mechanical Design Competition for Regional Students**

Uniontown, PA – March 25, 2026– The Fayette Business Education Partnership (FBEP), an initiative of the Fayette Chamber of Commerce and the Redstone Foundation, proudly hosted its annual Mechanical Design Competition, bringing together middle school students from across the region for an engaging, hands-on introduction to engineering.

Funded by EQT, the competition was held over two sessions, beginning with a hands-on learning day followed by a competitive design challenge. Students were introduced to the fundamentals of hydraulics and pneumatics, applying real-world engineering concepts to design and build functional mechanical systems.

This year’s competition featured 20 student teams representing 13 school districts across Fayette, Westmoreland, and Washington counties, highlighting the growing interest in STEAM education and technical career pathways throughout the region.

A key contributor to the event was Dr. Gerald Angle, an engineering professor from Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus, who assisted in coordinating the event and developed this year’s competition scenario. His expertise helped create a meaningful, real-world challenge that pushed students to think critically, collaborate effectively, and innovate.

Programs like the Mechanical Design Competition are more important than ever as today’s job market continues to evolve at a rapid pace. Hands-on learning experiences give students the opportunity to explore career pathways early, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and gain confidence in applying what they learn in the classroom to real-world situations. By engaging directly with engineering concepts and industry-relevant skills, students are better prepared to navigate a workforce that increasingly values adaptability, technical knowledge, and creativity.

“The Mechanical Design Competition is about more than building a project, it’s about building confidence, problem-solving skills, and awareness of the opportunities that exist right here in our region,” said Kathi Hull, FBEP Coordinator. “These students are gaining early exposure to careers in engineering, manufacturing, and skilled trades that are critical to our local economy.”



### **Congratulations to this year's winners:**

**Overall Champion:** Greensburg Salem – Team Gold

**2nd Place:** Laurel Highlands Middle School

**3rd Place:** Penn-Trafford Middle School – Team 2

### **Special Awards:**

• **Best Portfolio:** Franklin Regional – Team 1

• **Best Design:** St. John the Evangelist Regional Catholic School

• **Best Teamwork:** Leechburg

The Fayette Business Education Partnership continues to lead workforce development efforts by connecting students with hands-on learning experiences that align with in-demand careers. In addition to the Mechanical Design Competition, FBEP serves as a regional host of the National Civics Bee, helping students strengthen their understanding of civics and community engagement. The program also supports young entrepreneurs through initiatives like Biz Wiz Kids, which introduces elementary and middle school students to the fundamentals of business and innovation, and the Young Entrepreneurs Showcase, where students have the opportunity to launch and present their own ventures.

Together, these programs reflect FBEP's commitment to preparing the next generation with the skills, experiences, and confidence needed to succeed in today's workforce and become future leaders in our communities.

For more information about FBEP and its programs, please contact Kathi Hull at [khull@fayettechamber.com](mailto:khull@fayettechamber.com) or 724-437-4571.

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### **About the Fayette Business Education Partnership**

The Fayette Business Education Partnership (FBEP) connects education, business, and community partners to prepare students for success in college, career, and civic life. As a program of the Fayette Chamber of Commerce and the Redstone Foundation, FBEP works to strengthen workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and leadership development across the region.