2017
Washington
GIS Conference

May 15-18, 2017
Greater Tacoma
Convention &
Trade Center

Dick Thomas 1947 – 2006

Frequently Asked Questions
for the annual Richard 'Dick' Thomas Memorial
Student Presentation Competition & Award
May 18, 2017

About the Student Presentation Competition & Award

1. 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 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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 judges and the second is for the authors of those abstracts to present their work as detailed in the abstract at the annual Washington GIS Conference.

5. 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. The competition is also open to students who completed coursework within the last year, but the presentation needs to be on work completed during the school program.

6. 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.

7. How many presenters can be in a group?
Presentation groups can have no more than three presenters.

8. 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.

9. Should projects be the students' original work?
Entries must be the original work by the students.

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. Can students enrolled in an online degree program enter?
Washington state residents enrolled in an online geospatial degree program may enter the competition.

13. What should projects relate to?
Projects should relate to geography, GIS, or allied technologies.

14. What subjects should projects apply to?
Projects should apply to a social, natural resource, business, government, or similar subject.

15. 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!

16. 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. After an invitation to present at the annual Washington GIS 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 the DTA Competition Coordinator, to be included on WAURISA's web site.

Prizes

17. What are the prizes for the Dick Thomas Competition?

First Place
- Dick Thomas Award Plaque
- $500
- One year membership in WAURISA
- Free registration to the 2018 Washington GIS Conference
- Publication of paper in *The Summit* (Washington's quarterly GIS newsletter)
- Plus, possible additional prizes

Second Place
- Dick Thomas Second Place Award Certificate
- $250
- One year membership in WAURISA
- Publication of paper in *The Summit*
- Plus, possible additional prize

Third Place
- Dick Thomas Third Place Award Certificate
- $125
- One year membership in WAURISA
- Publication of paper in *The Summit*
- Plus, possible additional prizes

Honorable Mention
- Dick Thomas Honorable Mention Certificate
- Publication of paper in *The Summit*
- Plus, possible additional prizes

18. 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.

19. 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 annual Washington GIS Conference.

Abstracts

20. How will abstracts be chosen to present at the competition?

The DTA Student Competition judges will review all presentation abstracts, and select those that will be presented during the DTA Student Competition at the annual Washington GIS Conference. The judges retain the prerogative to choose more than 4 abstracts to be presented at the Conference.

21. 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):

22. 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.

23. What is the deadline to submit abstracts?
Deadline to submit abstracts: **Friday, April 7th, 2017**
This deadline may be extended at the discretion of the DTA Student Competition organizer.

24. Who will review the abstracts?
The WAURISA DTA Student Competition judges will review submitted abstracts.

25. When will entrants be notified of their acceptance to present at the Conference?
The DTA Student Competition organizer will notify all entrants of their status by **Saturday April 22, 2017.**

26. Where can I submit my abstract?
Abstract can be submitted online starting on February 1st 2017 using the form located here:
http://www.waurisa.org/conferences/Abstract_submissions/StudentCompetitionAbstracts.php

Registration

27. 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.

28. 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 annual Washington GIS Conference for the day of the DTA Student Presentation Competition. Students will be given a special code to register after acceptance of their abstract.

29. Can student advisors or professors attend the presentations?
Yes, we are offering a limited number of 1-day passes for student advisors/professors interested in attending for the DTA Student Presentation Competition. These are on a first come basis. Advisors/professors interested in registering for the day of the competition only, need to send an email request to: dta@waurisa.org

30. 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. To arrange this send an email request to: dta@waurisa.org

The Presentation Session

31. When will students present their papers at the 2017 WAURISA Conference?
Thursday, May 18, 2017

32. 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.

33. Will a laptop and projector be available?
A laptop with a PC Projector will be available.

34. Will internet access be available?
Internet access in the presentation room may be available, but is not guaranteed.

35. Do I need to bring a PDF copy of my presentation to the presentation session?
Yes. Please bring an electronic copy of your presentation in PDF format for publication on the WAURISA web site after the Conference.

36. 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 room.

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, to 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.

Judging Criteria

37. 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

The Competition winners will be announced during the Closing Session of the Conference. All judge decisions are final.

Previous winners

38. 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*.
2016 – No competition at the 2016 Conference
2015 - http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Issue39.pdf
2014 - http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Issue35.pdf
2013 - http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Summer_2013.pdf
2012 – http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Summer_2012.pdf
2011 – http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Autumn_2011.pdf
2011 – http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Winter_2011.pdf
2009 - http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Summer_2009.pdf
2008 – http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Summer_2008.pdf
2007 – http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Summer_2007.pdf

39. Where can I find the papers of previous years' winners?
2016 - No competition at the 2016 Conference
2015 - David Headrick and Mattie Wheeler (2nd place winners)
       http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Issue39.pdf
2014 - Anna Yost, Central Washington University:
       http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Issue36.pdf
2013 - Christopher Wright , University of Washington Bothell:
       http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Summer_2013.pdf
2012 - Renee Vandermause and Marshall Kosaka, Seattle University:
       http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Summer_2012.pdf
2011 - Kristan Blackhart and Jon Medlin, University of Washington:
       http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Autumn_2011.pdf
2010 - Stephan Gmur, University of Washington:
       http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Summer_2010-issue20.pdf
2009 - Jessica Larson, Green River College:
       http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Summer_2009.pdf
2008 - Joowon Park, College of Forest Resources at University of Washington:
       http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Summer_2008.pdf
2007 - Mike Westra, University of Washington GIS Certificate Program:
       http://www.waurisa.org/thesummit/TheSummit_Summer_2007.pdf