ocMaker Challenge to showcase students' 3D modeling and 3D printing skills
The STEM-based competition asks teams to solve real-world problems.

COSTA MESA, Calif. – More than 150 teams from Orange County middle schools, high schools and community colleges will participate Friday, May 12 and Saturday, May 13 in a STEM-based design competition where students use 3D modeling, 3D printing and other advanced technologies to build prototypes of products aimed at solving real-world problems.

The annual ocMaker Challenge supports creativity and innovation by converging academics with hands-on learning to promote 21st century skills. Teams' prototypes will be showcased and judged at the free public event at Chapman University's Hutton Sports Center.

The ocMaker Challenge integrates science, technology, engineering, and math, or STEM, by encouraging students to identify a unique problem or need, document solutions and use technologies that include 3D modeling and 3D printing. Teams began as early as October designing and building prototypes. These projects will be judged on criteria including originality and functionality. Top teams will win cash prizes during an awards ceremony that begins at 1 p.m. Saturday.

"The ocMaker Challenge is a great opportunity for kids to demonstrate their creative thinking and have an opportunity to share their ideas," said Elyse Sharp, a math teacher and advisor of a team from Orangeview Junior High School in Anaheim. "I want students to think outside the box and have a voice in what matters in the world. The ocMaker Challenge is perfect for that approach."

Event sponsors Airwolf 3D and MatterHackers, as well as Irvine Valley College and Golden West College, will also provide visitors hands-on experiences with 3D printers, and other technologies.

The ocMaker Challenge is organized by the Orange County Department of Education's Career Technical Education Partnership (CTEp), Career Technical Education of Orange County (CTEoc), and Vital Link. For more information, call 714-966-3531 or visit ocmakerchallenge.com.

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