

## June 2016

### Global Finals

12 Maine teams went down to Global Finals in Knoxville this year and did a great job representing Maine. We had teams participating in five of the six challenges. The teams and their challenges are:

- Animal Justice League
  - Meme Event
- The BHS Squad
  - Get A Clue
- The Breakfast Club
  - Meme Event
- DIPD
  - Get a Clue
- The Doormats
  - In Plain Sight
- The Eagles
  - Get a Clue
- The Frog Busters
  - In Plain Sight
- The Frozen Dinnahs
  - Musical Mashup
- Grand DI-Ilusion
- Improviest Improvers
  - Close Encounters
- The Sneaky Sugar Suspects
  - Get a Clue
- Tin Hat Booger Bears
  - Close Encounters

All of the teams did a great job and two, Animal Justice League and the Sneaky Sugar Suspects, finished in the top 10 placing 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> respectively. Way to go everyone!!

In addition to competing, teams:

- were paired with other teams from foreign countries;

- participated in workshops like stage combat;
- tried foreign foods at the international block party
- rode on a NASA simulator;
- escaped from a garage;
- watched other teams perform;
- saw what liquid nitrogen can do; and
- traded pins.

Each activity brought kids into contact with kids from other parts of the country or other parts of the world. Watching other challenges showed teams what is possible when creative minds come together. This was truly an experience they will remember all their lives. If you know someone who went, make sure you ask them about their experience.

### Recruiting during the summer

The season has now come to a close for Team Managers, but it is in full swing up for the CreateMe team. We will be attending three Maker events in the next two months and will be at a three day 4-H event at the end of July. This outreach is important if we want to keep DI thriving in Maine. If you know of anyone who might be interested in having a DI team, please pass their information on to us. We would be happy to speak with them and will be working hard all summer to increase the level of participation across the state.

### Team Manager Survey

Last month we asked you to participate in survey to see how you felt about the DI process. Many of you answered and your answers are important to us. They are so important that we want to share them with you and see if you have any additional suggestions for making the results even more positive.

**If you know of someone who is thinking about DI or if you have any personal contacts at other schools or organizations that could help us spread the word about DI, please let either Chad or Tim know. We want to help make it possible for everyone to experience Maine DI and become a DIMAINIAC!**

## Team Manager Survey

- Communication from CreateME
  - 87% Very Good/Excellent
  - 13% Good
- CreateME's new registration program
  - 59% Very Good/Excellent
  - 32% Good
  - 9% Fair/Poor
- Regional Celebrations
  - 43.5% Very Good/Excellent
  - 17.5% Good
  - 9% Fair/Poor
  - 30% Did not attend
- State Celebration
  - 74% Very Good/ Excellent
  - 17% Good
  - 9% Fair
- Your Experience as Team Manager
  - 77% Very Good/Excellent
  - 18% Good
  - 5% Fair
- How Likely are You to Return Next Year
  - 78% Likely/Very Likely
  - 13% Maybe
  - 9% Unlikely
- How Likely are You to Recommend DI
  - 91% Likely/Very Likely
  - 9% Maybe

What could we do to better support team managers?

This is a topic that CreateME spent a great deal of time and effort working on this season. We know that this program would not exist without team managers and tried to make sure to let team managers know how valuable they are. The majority of responses can be broken into three categories.

1. I think you all did an excellent job, thank you!!
  - a. We were very excited to see these responses and feel that our efforts are paying off. We know there is still more to do, but we appreciate the positive reinforcement.
2. There needs to be more training materials, training opportunities, and support, especially for new Team Managers.
  - a. As a Team Manager who was left on my own my first year, I understand the difficulties of coaching without support. We will continue to work on providing support to those Team Managers who need it. This year we had a dedicated Team Manager Resource person Team Managers could contact. We also, with the support of local DI teams, held some training events. Two people came to one and five people came to another. We will be discussing how to make these more effective and welcome your suggestions.

3. Better coordination of volunteers and appraisers.
  - a. This is a theme that runs throughout the free form questions. Just as we focused on Team Managers this year, we need to give the same attention to volunteers and appraisers. Just like Team Managers, DI cannot function without them. We have heard your comments and will do a better job.

#### What worked well this season?

1. Talking to other team managers who had worked with DI before.
  - a. We agree. Would experienced Team Managers be willing to act as a mentor to new Team Managers?
2. State and regional communication was timely. I always received prompt responses to my questions.
  - a. Thank you
3. I was very pleased with the close proximity of the holding rooms and the challenge site
  - a. We do our best each year, but this is often based on the space we have available.
4. I liked the Hampden Academy location for regionals.
  - a. We are glad to hear that. Hampden Academy has shown interest in continuing the Regional Showcase there. They were very pleased with hosting this year. There has been some mention they would like to host our State Tournament in the future. What are your thoughts?
5. Providing time outside meetings for teams to get to know each other better.
  - a. We are not sure exactly what this means, but we love hearing that teams are interacting with each other.
6. Flexibility when we couldn't reach the deadline.
  - a. We will always try to be as flexible as possible. However, please keep in mind that we put those deadlines in place to give us time to prepare for the regional showcases and state celebration. We often hear complaints from Team Managers that the schedules are not out early enough.
7. The online registration process worked very well.
  - a. We are glad to hear this. This was our first year with the system and we know there were some hiccups. The system was actually created for the DI program in Tennessee and we are not able to make changes that might make more sense for us in Maine. We also understand that asking parents, volunteers, and appraisers to be involved in the registration process could be time consuming. However, the system worked to provide CreateME with useful data, and we were actually able to go into the system, see where teams were in the registration process, and, in some cases, help them complete the process.
8. We had a little more time this year between regionals and states.
  - a. We are glad you liked this. The state celebration was late this year due to the availability of UMO. The late date of the state celebration gave very little time for teams going to Globals to raise the needed money.
9. Organization at the State Celebration seems better every year. / Scheduling was much smoother this year at state finals, than in the past. Thank you!
  - a. Thank you and you are welcome.
10. Regionals

- a. Regionals are a wonderful way to let your team practice in front of appraisers and watch what other teams are doing. We missed them when they stopped, and are very excited they are back.
- 11. Fall trainings were valuable for new TMs. States went well - I enjoyed the TM challenge.
  - a. We try to make the training and support for new Team Managers as useful as possible. We are thrilled you enjoyed the Team Manager Challenge and hope more Team Managers participate next year.
- 12. I liked the newsletters.
  - a. As the author of the newsletters, I appreciate this. Thank you.

What suggestions do you have for next season?

- 1. Better training options for new DI team managers. / more brief info for new leaders.
  - a. Please see above. We are listening.
- 2. I'll gladly be an appraiser, lots of years of OM & DI experience.
  - a. For those of you looking for an appraiser, here is someone. If only we knew who they were!
- 3. I thought the challenge was too complicated for the age kids I had. (We did Pace of Change with 3rd and 4th graders.
  - a. The challenges can be difficult because it is one challenge for all levels. The idea is that the kids learn through the process and come up with a solution that is at their level.
- 4. We had an issue trying to save information for later use on the interactive forms (though that may have been our computer). This made it difficult because the kids made some changes to their skit just before the regional competition and then had to retype the information on the forms instead just being able to fix a couple sentences.
  - a. The online forms are created by national DI. We will pass your concerns along.
- 5. Provide activities between the end of performances and the final ceremony.
  - a. I am so glad you mentioned this. Did you know that there was an activity zone this year which had activities for the kids to try. In addition, the team manager challenge happened after the last challenge and before closing ceremonies. We are trying to make the state celebration more of an experience. If anyone has ideas, please let us know.
- 6. As a team manager this year, I unfortunately had a negative experience at State Celebration in Orono involving the appraisal process. It's rather unclear to me (and some other coaches) how our teams are scored, and speaking up respectfully doesn't seem to change anything about the process. In conversations with other coaches, we agreed that coaching puts a lot of responsibility and pressure on us, and when the outcome of this hard work is undesirable to kids and/or parents, our hands are tied as to how to best handle these situations. I would suggest a more "fair" appraisal process, better training for new/young appraisers, and more recognition for these young children who performed very well. Thank you for taking my thoughts into consideration.
  - a. I am sorry to hear you had an unpleasant experience. If you would like to contact our Affiliate Director, Chad Reynolds, and he would be happy to speak with you about this situation.
- 7. We received complaints from some volunteers regarding volunteer preparedness and understanding of rules for Orono.
  - a. Please see above. We are listening.

8. Appraisers should be more familiar with their challenge/ intent of challenge. I would argue that some scored ended up being unfair for Improv. Specifically with intent of the confined space.
  - a. Appraiser training is always a difficult situation. Folks are giving up their time to represent teams. We are always looking to improve on the training process for the appraisers. If you have any suggestions, please send them to us. We are always open to new things.
9. Post more info about ceu's and target teachers for job of appraisers.
  - a. This is a great idea. We will work on this.
10. The new registration is difficult because it requires parents to log on and fill out the forms for their children. Getting my parents to do things on time is like herding cats.
  - a. Please see above. We understand the concern, but the program makes organizing the showcases and state celebration much more efficient. We appreciate your patience and efforts on our behalf.
11. Is there any way to get more teams? Can we make regionals mandatory?
  - a. As mentioned in our newsletters, we are working hard to increase the number of teams. We hope our efforts will pay off. You can help by spreading the word and encouraging people and/or organizations to start teams.
12. Can we make regionals mandatory?
  - a. Unfortunately, we do not feel we can make regionals mandatory at this point. The reason for this is, if we make regionals mandatory DI rules say it is an official tournament and we need to cut teams before they get to states. At this time, we want all teams to have a chance to compete at states to make it as competitive as possible.