

THE DAILY ZIP

IC TODAY, I SOLVE TOMORROW

THE DAILY ZIP REPORT

Harini Jeevaraj, Middle Division -

Australia

Behind every Google Map, there is a much more complex map that's the key to your queries but hidden from your view.

In my first year of Future Problem Solving, little did I know that I would successfully make it past border security at LAX Airport, let alone be sitting in the University of Wisconsin La Crosse writing this article. I've got to admit that at the beginning, completing a FPS scenario was a distant reach away and the introductory meeting at school had me wanting to quit. I thought back then that it would be impossible to accept that FPS would become one of the most enthralling and exciting experiences in my life so far.

A month or so before the International Conference, I was given an itinerary for the duration of the program. My eyes quickly skimmed past most of the activities on show but what caught my attention was the Memento Exchange. I had never heard of anything like it before and to be completely honest, it sounded like a silly idea. I was given a bag of Australian flags, keyrings and bandanas and was almost in disbelief that these simple items would be the foundation of new ideas and learnt lessons.

In the hustle and bustle of the Memento Exchange the enthusiasm from competitors of all nations was infectious. It was so great to see the entirety of the conference with each of the affiliates equally represented. Students and coaches rushed around waving their country's flag, exchanging small novelties and wearing my personal favourite; cheese heads. This meek idea was one that made me realise how significant connection on an international scale is. Modern international relations give us deep cultural understanding that is a foundation for interaction with different values and beliefs. Nations often face global concerns that are larger than any specific country and Future Problem Solving promotes awareness of these issues in an extremely unique way. I believe the most important thing about the program is its ability to enhance our perception of worldwide complexities.

The first part of this article effectively describes FPS in just a sentence. It may seem like one initiative but behind closed doors it has opened the minds of many around the world and helped us to learn and understand whilst investing in what we hope will be a bright future for those internationally.



THE MOMENTOUS OPENING CEREMONY

SALONI SHAH,
MIDDLE DIVISION -
CALIFORNIA

My breathtaking journey at the 42nd FPS IC began at the magnificent opening ceremony. Over 2,300 attendees flocked the Gyms of Mitchell Hall; flagbearers from ten countries (United States, Australia, China, Republic of Georgia, India, Israel, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey) marched proudly displaying uniqueness and culture keeping the tradition since the beginning of FPS IC in 1974. From the heart-warming, emotional opening speech by Lexi Cadieu, an FPS alumni, to the inspirational remarks of the scholarship winners, I am overjoyed that I decided to attend the opening ceremony in lieu of my 8th grade middle school graduation ceremony and promotion party; and last of all, I am proud to be one of the selected participants to participate with incredible energy in the most widely attended FPS IC.



IC 2017 REFLECTION

ORIANA ALLEN,
JUNIOR DIVISION –
AUSTRALIA

FPS! Wow, what an achievement!

National pride, friends, new experiences and a goal that many can only dream about. Well we are here, so congratulations. And I know it's cheesy, but no matter how well you do, you are all winners. Even just being invited to attend IC makes you a champion.

I think the reason we hold Future Problem Solving Program International is so that students from participating countries can unite. Here everyone gets along; all types of people from all around the world. This is what the world should be like. Together we can all achieve so much more.

Personally, FPSPI has allowed me to achieve things that I never thought possible. I now truly understand what self-belief is, and I have discovered some of my strengths, in particular perseverance. It has brought new relationships and has strengthened others, as I am meeting many new people and getting to spend priceless time with some of the people I love.

I have come to realise that applying the skills that we are learning through FPS will benefit the world as we CAN make a difference. We just need to have passion for a cause and use our skills to bring about change.

We will create memories in the days to come that will last a lifetime. Oh and GOOO... AUSTRALIA!

IC DIVERSITY

Lasya Damaraju, Pooja Shah, Sofia Valcourt, Sophia Pliego; Middle Division – Florida

10 countries, 6 steps, 1 solution
Coming together in an FPS revolution
Collecting mementos from the eastern to the western hemisphere
Coming from countries far and near

Meeting new people and making new friends
Our circle of friendship extends
Performing skits with lots of laughs
Thanking the people on the FPS staff

Making a difference through the CMPS fair
Knowing that there are people who care
Oh, how the time has passed
But we know these memories will last

MY INSPIRATION

Tahi Wiggins, Senior Division - Virginia

Often, on my morning drive to school, I get stuck behind a tractor. The nearest movie theater is an hour's drive away. In my school parking lot sits a line of dusty, jacked-up pickup trucks with the tagline, "redneck row." This is my hometown, and yet I speak less than fondly of it: in actual fact, I am chomping at the bit to leave, to explore, and to greet new ideas with open arms and excitement. It is from this ever-present frustration that my adoration for FPS arises. The collection of unique, creative, and brilliant individuals is so conducive to the birth of new ideas, friends, and (for me) happiness.

Originally, writers for the Daily Zip were encourage to illustrate a memorable experience they had through FPS, but I found this difficult: they have been too many! It is my feeling that all of the wonderful interactions I've had come together to represent how truly amazing FPS is: from joyfully reconnecting with friends made at past ICs to engaging conversations with fellow seniors to a clumsy rendition of a classic Neil Diamond with twenty other (former) strangers, FPS has, time and time again, shows me wonderful and inspiring individuals it attracts. It is these people, this experiences, that keep me inspired even when my vision is filled with cornfields and fishing boats back home. For this, I must thank all of you FPSers, participants or otherwise. It is these minds that will change the world, and to be a part of that is a true honor.

2017 FPS IC POEM

Tena Gordon, Senior Division - Florida

Ramadan mubarak!

I await the day FPS boasts more black competitors and flourishes in the Caribbean.
People of different ethnicities
Competing against different nationalities
Utilizing individuality and synergy.

Through the long, gendered bathroom lines,
Places closed after late-night competitions,
And events too early for me to be cognizant,
I problem solve and practice patience.
Special senior events flexin' my complexion and my experience,
Daring me to be sociable,
Appreciatin' that I stayed FPS'in.

Six years and countin',
I can't believe I'm finally here.
I've done Scenario Writing, GIPS, CmPs, and Scenario Performance.
In that order.
Writin', typin', and evaluatin'.
This long trip was a long-time comin'.
Thank you, Florida FPS, for invitin' me.

SCARED

Amelia Guanci, Middle Division - Illinois

I woke up Thursday morning at 5:30, and immediately wished to sink back into my plastic-wrapped mattress. Finally I gathered the courage to sit up, promptly hitting my head on the ceiling of my top bunk dorm bed. Sighing I climbed down, past whirling fans to get ready. My stomach and my legs started to hurt, and I wanted nothing more than to go home. Preferably without competing. We walked to breakfast, and I downed a waffle, but only barely.

Entering the room, I sat down in my table. Talking to my team was awkward, and I found out that I was the oldest. My head clouded with even more dread. How were we going to even finish? Much less place?

The competition started a bit rocky, but soon we fell into a positive loop, creeping upward. We made story maps, we plotted scene, then we got to work! Suddenly the whole world seemed less nerve wracking. It turns out that we were a wonderful team, and we finished with time to edit and review. It was exciting to feel so successful, and I'm proud of us, no matter how well or poorly we did! We created something, and I think that's the point of scenario writing. To think, to understand, and to create.

UNTITLED

KATIE GUANCI, MIDDLE DIVISION – ILLINOIS

Being the younger sister of the three-time FPSI go-er is pretty tough. I mean, every single time I walk down the stairs, the first thing I see is huge trophies towering over me on the shelf. It's an intimidating legacy.

This year, the reason I entered my Scenario Performance in FPSI was because I was feeling left behind. My sister was moving on to better places, and I was stuck. I thought this might be a chance to change myself, but I had no idea what I was getting into.

I wanted to go home the first hour. When things loosened up, however, I began to crawl out of my shell and into a world of accents, new friends, and new experiences. I sat with different people every lunch day. I competed and told my story as best as I could. I began to feel the freedom of it being acceptable to strike a conversation with anybody. I sorted my trades. I had such a great, magnificent time.

Now, someday I hope, as this experience helps me on my way to becoming my own person, I can land a second trophy on the shelf. More importantly than any prizes, I have realized it's not about what you win, it's about the experiences you have and bonds you build that help you become a champion.

SCENARIO PERFORMING

Marlee Krause, Middle Division - Florida

The first year I attended FPSPI (this year is my second time), was one of the first year they introduced the new Scenario Performance aspect of the competition. That was 2 years ago. I remember attending that first performance, when there were just a handful of performers, and I was immediately hooked! Afterwards, they had a Scenario Performance workshop where students got to work together to form a spontaneous story on stage. That exhilarating experience motivated me to want to try my hand at this new form of FPS competition.

Usually a team booklet competitor, I had always thought I wanted to try something different, like Scenario Writing, but was daunted by the task. Scenario Performance seemed the perfect antidote — it allowed me to spread my creative wings and indulge my creative side in the spontaneity that comes with telling short stories.

Evidently, many others have been hooked in this way. Even though the competition is still small — with only 30 competitors total at IC this year — the numbers are growing. This year's competition packed the large auditorium, and there's little doubt there will be many in that audience who will be up on stage next year.

Krupali Patel from Florida was one of the Senior division Scenario Performers participating in this year's IC competition. "I got into Scenario Writing first and, when I wrote it, I thought to myself, well, what if I just perform the Scenario?" And when she heard that she could, she was ecstatic that she could tell her stories in a vibrant...

SCENARIO PERFORMING, CONT'D

...and passionate way.

Another Scenario Performance competitor, Jasmine Francik from Florida, says that she is also hooked on the thrill of performing her scenarios. "I love to act and perform and write as well," Jasmine said. So, when she heard about Scenario Performance, she couldn't wait to pounce on such a great opportunity to channel her dramatic and creative side.

Many people have only just heard about the amazing program. Jessica Lou from Wisconsin says that even though she's never seen a Scenario Performance, she thinks that "It's really cool that the performers get to express themselves through their speech and that their performances are not just words on paper but that you get to hear their emotions through their story."

I'm glad I decided to compete in Scenario Performance at my State competition last year. It was a challenge and a thrill. I plan to do so again next year. Scenario Performance may not be for everyone, but I would encourage anyone to try it.



THE RUNAWAY BAG

SOPHIA PLIEGO; MIDDLE DIVISION – FLORIDA

This was my first year joining FPS. Qualifying for the FPS International Competition was one of the happiest days of my life. And traveling to IC was one of the most exciting, in part because it was my first time ever on an airplane! The start of the trip, however, did not have a smooth takeoff. After my three-hour flight, I went to baggage claim. While everyone else was gathering their things, I was frantically trying to find mine. After walking around the carousel for what seems like eternity, I accepted the fact my luggage wasn't there.

My mom and I talked to baggage services. They claimed that my luggage would be coming on the next flight, and should arrive at 2:30 p.m. I was ecstatic to be obtaining my luggage so soon, but then realized the bus ride from the airport to the university was almost three hours. Luckily, a worker from HMI (Hamilton Meetings & Incentives, LLC), who was coordinating the bus ride needed to stay until 2:45 p.m. and offered to bring my luggage with him. My greatest concern, however, was the arrival of my belongings not being here in time for the memento exchange. All my mementos were packed inside!

As time passed, my anxiety grew stronger, with the fear my luggage won't be here. The exchange had begun, but my things were still in transit. Luckily, my teammates gave me a few of their mementos to trade. As I started to circulate, I was astounded by what represented each country and state. I only had a few things with me, but received many memorable souvenirs in return. Everyone was so generous when they found out about my predicament.

Ten minutes before the memento exchange came to an end and the opening ceremony was to begin, my hands started to tremble. My mom called me, running with all of my belongings so I could exchange some of my most valuable mementos. With the little time left, I exchanged almost all my mementos for special souvenirs from other cultures. In the end, I really enjoyed the memento exchange and I know others did too.

"I think the memento exchange is really cool to get to talk to people from other states and countries, and to be able to swap stuff from there," Jessica Liu of Wisconsin said. "I got a really big Texas flag and I always get koalas from Australia and I get fans."

Jennifer Hu, from Singapore, also thought the exchange was a great experience.

"It's awesome," she said. "I really like this killer whale keychain, which is from the Seaworld in San Diego."

All in all, the memento exchange was an unforgettable experience that I will always cherish and I hope to be able to do it again. The best part was the generosity and empathy I experienced from the students from all over the world.