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Media Contact: Mary Bevan
814-269-2490 or bevanm@ctc.com

CTC Foundation Sponsors Great Americans Day Essay Contest, Honors Local Students

Johnstown, PA, June 24, 2014 – CTC Foundation, an affiliate of Concurrent Technologies Corporation (CTC), recently sponsored the Great Americans Day Essay Contest for the sixth consecutive year. Students from Johnstown, PA and surrounding areas are encouraged to research and write a two-page essay about the Great American highlighted at the Great Americans Day Citizenship Forum, held at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown (UPJ). This year's Great American subject was Ely Samuel Parker.

Ely Samuel Parker was a Native American from the Seneca tribe who became an attorney, engineer, and tribal diplomat. He rose to the rank of Brevet Brigadier General during the Civil War and was responsible for writing the Confederate surrender terms at Appomattox that ended the Civil War.

Over a dozen entries were received in the essay contest, and the winners were Victoria Cidor, first place, and Megan Beale, second place. Both are eleventh-grade students at Northern Cambria High School under teacher Karen Bowman. They earned cash prizes for winning the contest.

Victoria's essay highlighted the fact that "Parker was a bridge between two great societies" even though "he constantly faced obstacles." Ely Parker "accomplished in his life what might take the average person several lives to do."

The Great Americans Day essay contest is an extension of the annual Great Americans Day Citizenship Forum held at UPJ. Howard M. Picking, III, CTC Board of Directors Chairman, and his wife, Adelle, started the Great Americans Day Citizenship Forum in 1998 and generously provide the funding for the forum.

An awards ceremony was held on June 24, 2014, at CTC's Environmental Technology Facility to honor the essay contest winners. Megan Beale, second place winner, was in attendance. Victoria Cidor was unable to attend the ceremony.

Cash prizes for the essay contest are possible because of a generous donation from Conway B. Jones, Jr., CTC Foundation Board Chair.

"The Great Americans Day Citizenship Forum and this essay contest highlight the ability of any American to make a difference," said Edward J. Sheehan, Jr., President & Chief Executive Officer of CTC and President, CTC Foundation. "Ely Parker faced discrimination along with many other obstacles in his life, yet was able to prosper and be successful. His education was interrupted; he obtained a law degree but couldn't practice; he was originally denied admittance into the Union Army; and in his lifetime, he was not recognized as a U.S. citizen because of his Native American heritage. But he fought for our country and made it a better place, and the CTC Foundation is honored to recognize him as a Great American. Thank you to Victoria and Megan for their essays, which show why Ely Parker deserves that title."

Concurrent Technologies Corporation (CTC) is an independent, nonprofit, applied scientific research and development professional services organization providing innovative management and technology-based solutions to government and industry. As a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, CTC's primary purpose and programs are to undertake applied scientific research and development activities that serve the public interest. For more information, visit www.ctc.com. CTC established the CTC Foundation in 1998 to promote the application of innovative, scientific, technological and humanistic principles to enhance economic progress and the quality of life. For more information, visit www.ctcfoundation.org.