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Weaver Female Students to Compete in National Engineering Competition

The Weaver High School (Hartford, CT) sophomore team of Joanne Edwards, Jericha Hadden, and Simone Sweeney, will be one of three teams competing nationally in the Transportation and Civil Engineering (TRAC) Program. The “Weaver Beavers” are finalists in the National Design and Build Contest for the Magnetic Levitation (MagLev) Car. MagLev is an advanced technology that utilizes very powerful magnetic fields to levitate and propel passenger vehicles along a track. The team was required to design, build and test several MagLev models and write a report to support their best design.

TRAC, which sponsors the program, is a hands-on, curriculum enhancement tool, which is used by state departments of transportation (DOT) to introduce high school and middle school students to Transportation Careers. TRAC was developed by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) in the early 1990s in an effort to recruit high school students, in particular minorities and women, into the transportation and civil engineering fields. The Connecticut (CT) TRAC Program has been in existence for ten years. Students benefit from the program benefits through the participation of thirty DOT volunteers and ten teachers at schools in Connecticut.

The contest will be held at the annual TRAC spring meeting in St. George (UT) on Saturday, May 15, 2004. This will be the first time that Weaver High School has been successful in reaching the finals. The team will be required to present their design and demonstrate its performance before 50 Commissioner-level DOT officials from around the country.

Hartford Public Schools: Our Students! Our Community! Our Future!

The Weaver Beavers rank 1,2 & 3 in the Sophomore Class and have strong interests in engineering or high technology careers. This interest has been nurtured by their work in the Connecticut Pre-Engineering Program (CPEP). CPEP is a partner with the CT TRAC Program. The executive director of CPEP, Mr. Glenn Cassis, has worked with TRAC from its inception in 1993. The Weaver Beavers are directed by their teacher, Mr. Darryl Harris and the CT TRAC volunteer, Ms. Sharon Okoye, of the Policy and Planning Division of DOT. The National TRAC Office presented Mr. Harris with an award for his distinguished service as the longest-standing, TRAC teacher-volunteer in July 2003. The Director of the CT TRAC Program is Mr. Ralph Phillips. He is a sixteen-year employee of the DOT and looks forward to seeing the girls bring home the trophy.

The Weaver Beaver team, including Ms. Harris and Ms. Okoye, will depart from Bradley Airport for Utah on Thursday, May 13 and return to Hartford on Sunday, May 16.

End