



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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## MWRD Commissioner Kari K. Steele, staff assist with Future City Competition



*MWRD Commissioner Kari K. Steele reviewed the St. Mary of the Woods' Future City exhibit and many more during her visit.*



*Senior Architect Michael Tom mentored the Immaculate Conception School team. He helped the students build their model and prepare for competition.*

The Chicago regionals of the Future City Competition which introduces 6th, 7th and 8th grade students to engineering with SimCity™ software was held at the University of Illinois at Chicago campus last weekend.

The Future City Competition gives students from across the country the opportunity to design cities with simulation software, build scale models, write essays and give oral presentations on their city's design.

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Commissioner Kari K. Steele and five MWRD employees participated in the weekend's events. Terence Maiellaro, Senior Mechanical Engineer; Michael Zigulich, Associate Civil Engineer; and Lou Storino, Principal Civil Engineer, participated as preliminary round judges. Their role is to serve as a preliminary model and presentation judge for students' diorama model and presentation on the day of the competition. They also have an opportunity to serve as an Essay and Computer Model Judge prior to the event where they review and score essays and Sim City computer models. As a former judge for the Future City Competition, Commissioner Steele was excited to see the creative and innovative ideas of all the students.

"Participating in the Future City Competition is just one example of the many ways that MWRD staff contribute to support youth and other community projects throughout the year. It is important to engage and encourage students who are interested in science, technology, engineering and math at a young age so that they have a better understanding of the career opportunities that are available," said Commissioner Steele.

Michael Tom, Senior Architect, mentored Immaculate Conception School, assisting the team build their model and preparing for the competition. Aruch Poonsapaya, AETPO II, coordinated Essay and Computer Model Judging and worked behind the scenes checking in judges and tabulating scores during competition.

This was the 26th annual international competition, and this year's theme was "The Age-Friendly City." Participants were tasked with envisioning an urban environment that keeps older adults active, engaged and independent. Working in a team with an educator and STEM mentor, students present their vision of the future through a virtual city design; write a 1,500 word essay; build a scale model of their city with recycled *(continued)*

## MWRD Commissioner Kari K. Steele, staff assist with Future City *(continued)*



*Aruch Poonsapaya, AETPO II, coordinated Essay and Computer Model Judging and worked behind the scenes checking in judges and tabulating scores.*

materials; and present a short presentation to a panel of STEM professionals. US regional winners will face off at the finals in Washington, DC in February, where they are joined by a growing roster of international teams, including those from Canada, Egypt and China.

“As an agency that relies on the skills and expertise of employees who have studied STEM curricula, we are proud to have the opportunity to support Future City,” said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos.

In the US, over 40,000 students, representing 1,350 schools, take part in the Future City Competition. One of the nation’s leading engineering education programs and among the most popular, Future City has received national recognition and acclaim for its role in encouraging middle school students to develop their interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).



*Michael Zigulich, Associate Civil Engineer, and Lou Storino, Principal Civil Engineer.*



*Terence Maiellaro, Senior Mechanical Engineer.*

Major funding for Future City comes from the Bechtel Corporation, Bentley Systems, Inc., Shell Oil Company, and DiscoverE. For more information about Future City, visit <https://futurecity.org/region/chicago-regional-competition-day-information>.

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### Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

*Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwr.org](http://www.mwr.org)) is an award winning, special purpose government agency responsible for used water treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.*