



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 28, 2016

For more information:
CONTACT: Michelle Chance,
Innovative Solutions Consortium,
571-246-2411

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) in Collaboration with the Innovative Solutions Consortium (ISC) launch first state-wide Crowdsourcing challenge to address real World problems.

Student-Led Ideation Challenge (SLIC) Program

www.slic-solutions.com



Last week VDOE and ISC formally released the information about the SLIC Program to the public on the VDOE website,

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/project-based-learning/slic/index.shtml>.

This Program is an example of the efforts VDOE is currently making to better prepare its high school graduates for the workforce, college, and life. The Department is currently working on defining the “Profile of a Virginia Graduate,” and the 5C’s (Critical thinking, Creative thinking, Collaboration, Communication, and Citizenship) to ensure students are prepared after they graduate. The SLIC Program is just one way the Commonwealth is making strides to implement authentic learning in the classroom.

Last year the ISC piloted their first student crowdsourcing challenge program with the inclusion of 5th-12th grade students in Loudoun County, VA. The program was publicly praised by Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe and yielded a variety of innovative student-based solutions around the topics of school security, decision support systems, and realigning educational practices to fit the needs of the 21st century.

Through collaboration between the VDOE and the ISC the SLIC Program was developed to build on the success of the Loudoun County pilot, and bring this impactful learning opportunity to every high school student in the Commonwealth of Virginia (approx. 400,000 students) for the 2016/17 academic school year. The Program applies Project-Based Learning (PBL) to real world problems, providing students with an authentic learning experience. This Program will be funded through a public-private partnership.

Mr. Bobby Keener, Chief Technology/Innovations Officer for the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Department of Education highlighted the educational benefits for students related to an innovative challenge initiative when he mentions, *“Critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills are needed to succeed in an ever-changing world. The SLIC Challenge allows students the real-world opportunity to develop and apply these skills while simultaneously increasing their knowledge on a range of topics. But more importantly, this type of experiential learning deeply engages them in a way that works. Our children truly believe that if given the opportunity that they can make a difference for the better and I am elated to help provide them with this opportunity that will also better prepare them for their future.”*

Innovative Solutions Consortium, www.isc-connect.org

Contact: Michelle Chance, Tel: 571-246-2411 Email: michelle.chance@isc-connect.org

The Student-Led Ideation Challenge was formally recognized earlier in June, 2016 for its positive impact by the Office of Science and Technology Policy at the White House during the National Week of Making ceremonies.

Michelle Chance, ISC Director of Operations and SLIC program lead, states, *“We are so honored and excited to be able to engage high schoolers in our global crowdsourcing efforts to solve some of the world’s hardest problems. The kids are thrilled to have an opportunity to make a difference in our world, and educators and industry are elated to have a program that gives students real world experience to better prepare them for the workforce.”*

The SLIC Program, although designed and developed in Virginia, is open to all high schools throughout the country. To register your school, district, or state, please contact info@slic-solutions.com.

The 2016/17 SLIC challenges are:

- **EDUCATION:** The 21st Century has changed the way we do business. This requires a new skill set. How can we better prepare graduating students for college, career and life in this ever-changing world?
- **TECHNOLOGY & ROBOTICS:** How can we create a light-weight small unmanned aviation vehicle (UAV, sometimes referred to as a drone) with automated “sense and avoid” capabilities to enable it to fly without colliding with environmental objects?
- **NATURAL RESOURCES & GLOBAL WARMING:** How do we determine if soil is “healthy,” and how can we encourage and coordinate people around the world to preserve and protect one of our greatest natural resources, fresh water. These two important areas directly impact sustaining a “Healthy” Planet.

Mr. Ken Spedden, founder of the ISC states, *“Uniting the next generation of innovators/design thinkers across geographical boundaries to address global challenges is by itself a victory for the human condition; and the student participants’ willingness to explore the art of the possible to enact positive change is inspiring. The ingenuity, ideas and possible solutions brought forward by these amazing students/champions of change may be transformative to improving all of our lives...globally.”*

For more information about the ISC and their other initiatives, please visit the [ISC website](#). For additional information on the SLIC Program and interview requests please contact Michelle Chance, michelle.chance@isc-connect.org or by phone at 571-246-2411.