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Department of Health launches second annual science contest for high school students

Contest registration is open now through March 15, submissions due by April 30

OLYMPIA – Following a successful inaugural event, the Washington State Department of Health’s (DOH) [Washington Tracking Network](#) (WTN) is excited to launch its second annual [WTN Youth Science Contest](#). The contest provides a unique opportunity for high school students across Washington to develop their science and communication skills while working with health and environmental data from their own communities.

“It’s important for students to learn how to understand and use data because it plays a big role in their lives,” said Jennifer Sabel, WTN manager. “In this contest, students learn not only how to work with and study public health data, but also how data can be used to create positive change in their communities.”

Participants can choose from three tracks:

- Health Science – students will perform an analysis with WTN data to reveal correlations, impacts, and/or disparities.
- Community Engagement – students will use WTN tools and data to address health and equity concerns. They will develop either a public policy proposal or work with a local organization to create or improve a project or program.
- Science Communication – students will identify an issue that is important to them and develop a message to increase awareness or drive action related to the issue.

Public health is an interdisciplinary field. The tracks of this contest help students explore different facets of what working in public health is like. Each track requires students to use WTN data and examine how their project addresses equity issues within their communities.

"The different tracks bring public health data to life. There are so many professional roles that go into supporting and improving health, all of which are important," said Sabel. "Last year students came up with inspiring projects, and I look forward to seeing what students create this year."

Registration is open through March 15. The official contest period is March 1 - April 30.

Winners will be announced in early June.

WTN is a DOH program that makes public health data more accessible. The mission of WTN is to provide health and environmental data and tools, develop partnerships, and inform data-driven policy and programmatic decisions, with the goal of improving health and health equity in Washington. Winning projects from last year's contest are [available to view on DOH's website](#).

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