

New Bedford's "Our Sisters' School" shines in international STEM competition

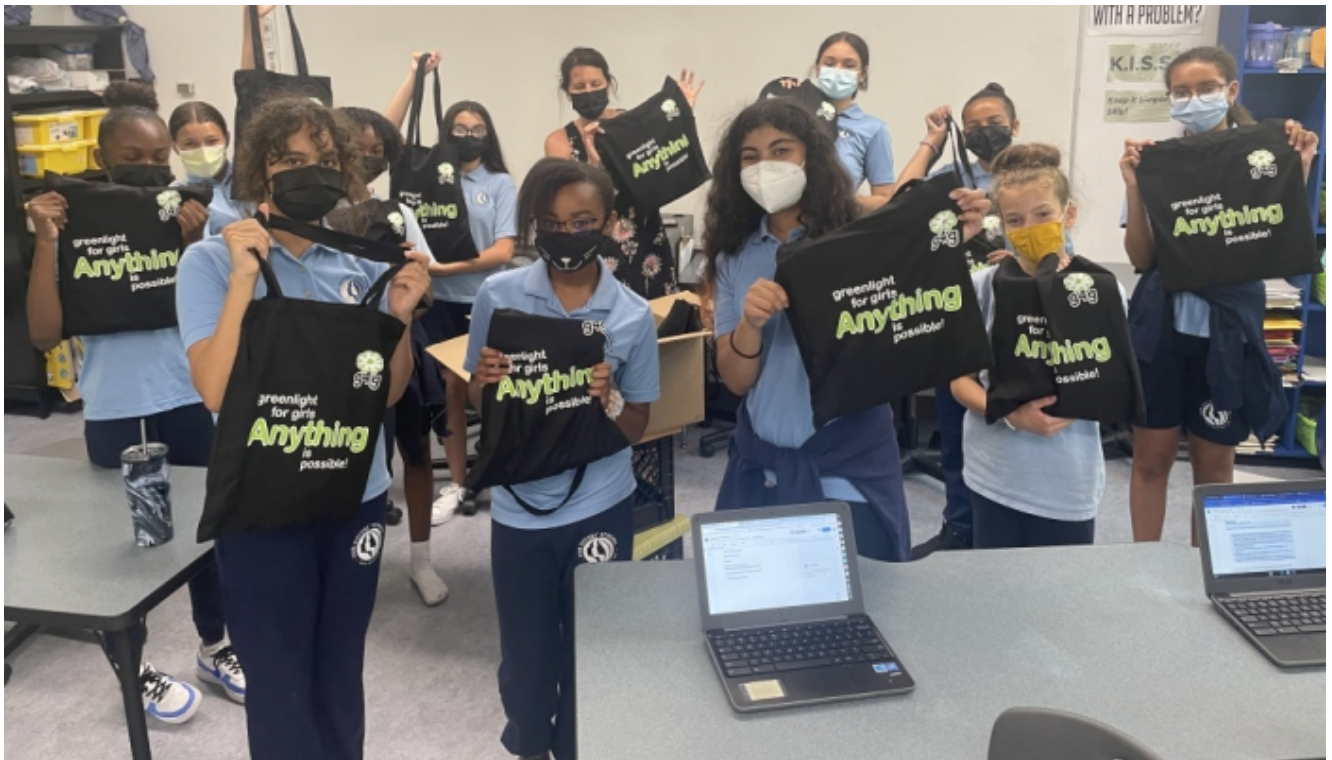
A team of student inventors from Our Sisters' School (OSS) was chosen as a "Grand School Winner" (one of three) and winner of the "Inventor Spirit Award" in the 2021 Great Passport to STEM Challenge, organized by Greenlight for Girls and the U.S. Embassy in Belgium.

The Challenge is a cross-cultural program that encourages girls from different backgrounds in the U.S. and Belgium to use STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) to solve an innovative design challenge. The OSS team worked for several months to create A.S.A.P., a robot that helps humans on the autism spectrum and ultimately creates a more equitable and inclusive learning environment. The team of 11 girls, in grades six and seven, designed the robot to include noise cancelling headphones, a friendly face that changes in response to the user, a heart monitor that alerts an educator that the user needs an intervention, and many other thoughtfully designed features. The OSS team also created a video that was viewed by the competition's international judges and participants.

In response to being chosen as a winning team, OSS sixth-grader, Attyanna, said, "It was a big surprise because there were other schools and they also had really good ideas." The judges praised the OSS team's efforts, noting, "You clearly identified a problem and a gap in school systems and went about trying to fill that gap. This was done with ingenuity."

The STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and

Mathematics) program at OSS has been growing steadily in recent years and is introducing students to skills and opportunities on par with those gained in college and graduate school. The curriculum is integrated with the School's other learning programs and encourages connection with vital community partners and supporters, including UMass Dartmouth and Tech Teachers Travel. OSS, which serves economically disadvantaged girls in grades five through eight from Greater New Bedford, is using STEAM to inspire creativity, confidence, and interdisciplinary learning. You can learn more about the School at <https://www.oursistersschool.org/>. OSS is currently accepting applications for fifth-graders for the fall.



Our Sister's School photo.