



Why would a College or University be interested in a Destination ImagiNation® (DI) program veteran?

The experiences afforded to DI students are often incomparable when realizing the real-world benefits. The CEO of a fortune 500 corporation recently observed that the new crop of outstanding performers in his company had one thing in common: experience in Destination Imagination!

Students graduating from the DI program have:

- Developed unique and creative critical thinking and problem solving skills;
- Learned and applied Creative Problem Solving methods and tools;
- Developed teamwork, collaboration and leadership skills while working with a diverse group of team members, learning to recognize, develop and use a variety of team member strengths and talents for the benefit of the whole;
- Honed research and inquiry skills, involving both creative exploration and attention to detail;
- Enhanced and applied written and verbal communication and presentation skills (both impromptu and sustained);
- Built self-confidence in the recognition, use and development of many and varied individual and team strengths and talents;
- Increased competence in, enthusiasm for, and commitment to real-life problem solving;
- Continued work on both academic and non-academic learning standards outside of the normal school day;
- Fostered passion for language arts, visual arts, science, and math!

Those experiences translate to coveted real world skills:

- Creativity
- Knowledge Application
- Problem Solving
- Collaboration
- Teamwork
- Generating & Focusing Tools
- Presentation Skills
- Project Management
- Confidence
- Time Management
- Research Skills
- Creative & Critical Thinking Skills
- Improvisational Skills
- Budgeting Skills

What is Destination ImagiNation®?

Destination ImagiNation®, a community-based, school-friendly program, is the world's largest creativity and problem solving organization that inspires participants in all of its programs to learn the process, art and skill associated with creative and critical thinking, teamwork, time management and problem solving, lifelong skills that will serve participants well. DI Inc. estimates that over 400,000 students in 41 foreign countries and all 50 U.S states took part in DI during the 2008/09 competition cycle. Destination ImagiNation® is a place where students, aged kindergarten through university level, take what they know and what they are good at and learn to apply it to solve challenges, working together and cooperatively with a team of no more than seven members and pushing the limits of imagination to best not just their competition, but themselves.

The Destination ImagiNation® Team Challenge is solved over a period of eight to 12 weeks. There are five competitive team challenges, each with its own educational focus and each designed to be open-ended and solvable in many ways and on many levels. Each challenge is primarily focused on one of five core requirements: technical construction, science, theater arts, improvisation, or structural design. Each team competes at regional, state and global levels. If you are unfamiliar with DI, winning “State” is the equivalent of taking top honors in football, basketball or other team sport; going on to “Globals” is equivalent to competing in the Olympics. It’s where the “best of the best” match wits, imaginations, creativity and personalities to become world champions. (You may be familiar with the forerunner to DI, Odyssey of the Mind.)

Team members faced with Performance-Based Challenges utilize their knowledge base in the science, social studies, mathematical, and language arts areas. Through the process of creatively solving the challenges, teams demonstrate standards of working with others, thinking and reasoning, and visual arts. Often teams will enhance their performance by using music or dance. In the Task-Based Challenges, teams are often required to use mathematics, science, and visual arts. In all challenges, teams are required to conduct extensive research and put what they’ve learned into practical application. Team members continuously blend their strengths and talents while cooperatively working with each other.

In addition to the team challenges explained above, teams are required to solve the Destination ImagiNation® Instant Challenge using their thinking-on-their-feet skills in a very short period of time at their Tournament, usually in a period of five to seven minutes, without knowing ahead of time what the Challenge will be! It’s a place where teamwork, cooperation and creativity shine.

With the guidance – but not help – of a Team Manager (who serves as facilitator, not coach), teams create an action plan and work together to create everything needed for their presentation. Unique to the Destination ImagiNation® program is the rule of “no interference.” Only team members may contribute to their individual team’s solution – no adult interference allowed. Teams present their solutions to both challenges at a tournament and are evaluated by trained “Appraisers.” In addition to “place” awards, teams that exhibit exceptional creativity in their problem solving and/or technical design may also be awarded coveted “Renaissance” or “DaVinci” awards.

One more real world example: It’s been nearly 40 years since Apollo 13’s safe return to earth after a creative group of quick thinking NASA engineers figured out how to provide oxygen to Apollo 13 astronauts after an oxygen tank overheated and exploded. Those engineers concocted a plan literally in a few hours using plastic bags, cardboard and duct tape in much the same manner DI teams solve their challenges every year using routine materials. Some day, the problem solving, out-of-the-box thinking skills these future leaders are honing in DI may be called upon in another national emergency ... or may create the next generation of technological advances that keep our country at the forefront. Destination ImagiNation® takes creative problem solving and cooperative teamwork to new heights with its unparalleled program, and the students who participate in the program are likewise unparalleled!