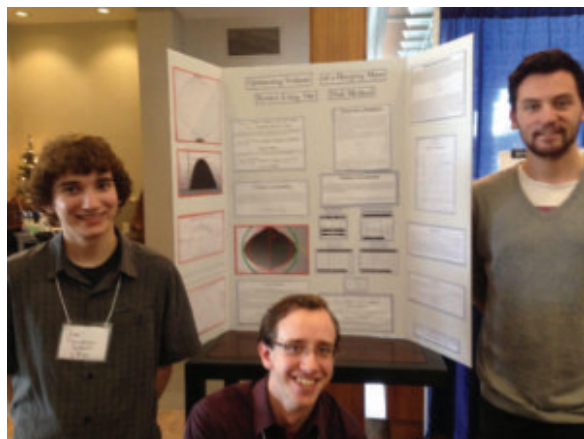


LTCC math students score at state contest



Christian Eckert, Mark McCullough and J.C. Stephens

Three Lake Tahoe Community College students grabbed the top prize at a statewide mathematics conference for their poster entry for general math.

The winning poster was designed to explain optimizing volume of a hanging mass system using the disk method. The disk method is a technique borrowed from calculus that can be used to find the volume of a rotating mass system.

Christian Eckert, Mark McCullough and J.C. Stephens built the contraption, rotated it, and collected data from it. They then compared elliptical, polynomial and sinusoidal models to come up with the best fitting model. Finally, they performed the experiment and completed the mathematics by themselves, with a bit of guidance from LTCC math instructor Larry Green.

The students won \$100 at the California Mathematics Council Community Colleges annual conference in Monterey this month.