

# Young inventors showcased at Rose State College in Midwest City

The 25th annual Oklahoma Student Inventors Exposition was this week at Rose State College in Midwest City.

BY SARAH LOBBAN • *Modified: February 28, 2014 at 12:28 pm • Published: March 1, 2014*

**MIDWEST CITY** — The next generation of Oklahoma inventors gathered at Rose State College this week to show off their creativity and scientific know-how.



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Ryan Schwartz, left, and Jack Love, of Nichols Hills Elementary School, pose with their "Don't Forget Me Mat" during the Oklahoma Student Inventors Exposition. They said the purpose of their invention is to remind you if you forgot anything. Photo By Steve Gooch, The Oklahoman **Steve Gooch - The Oklahoman**

The 25th annual Oklahoma Student Inventors Exposition drew students from kindergarten and up, vying for recognition for themselves and their schools.

The contestants at Tuesday's convention had already made it through their schools' invention fairs. More than 3,000 submitted ideas, and 190 students representing 50 Oklahoma schools were chosen to continue on.

"They're so excited when the time comes for them to be here," said Rose State Regent Betty Wright. "Some of the students have been working since September on their projects."

It could be said the convention itself is Wright's experiment, one she started more than two decades ago and has exceeded her high expectations.

The convention started when Wright was a fifth-grade teacher in Oklahoma City and created a science fair for her class. With help from inventor and businessman Julian Taylor, she grew the one-class fair into the statewide competition it is today.

## Problem-solving

Wright is retired now but still finds time to teach, traveling to schools in advance of the convention to educate children about the process of invention.

"You don't just tell them to make the next big invention right away," Wright said. "You have to teach problem-solving and critical thinking."

The kids tackled problems ranging from everyday nuisances like soggy cereal and finding a way to turn recycled material into art, to tissue bracelets for easy transport of nose-blowing necessities during cold season.