

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

***Design Squad Nation*
Announces Winners of Build Big Contest**

**Grand-Prize Winner Invents String Instrument that Plays
Bach's *J'esu, Joy of Man's Desiring***

**Contest Challenged Kids to *Think Big*
By Creating their Own Super-Sized *Design Squad* Activity**

BOSTON, MA (September 08, 2011) – *Design Squad Nation*, the series that works side by side with kids to help turn their dreams into reality, is pleased to announce the winners of its 2011 Build Big Contest. Paul Poulos, Kalin Ngo, and Robert Schill, students from Westlake High School in Westlake, Ohio, used rubber bands, plywood, and a lot of ingenuity to create a musical instrument that plays Bach's *J'esu, Joy of Man's Desiring*.

Paul, Kalin, and Robert learned about the Build Big Contest through a *Design Squad* class offered at Westlake High by their teacher Scott Kutz. One of the only classes of its kind, it uses *Design Squad* activities and videos to give kids hands-on experiences with engineering. "The US is lagging behind other countries in science, math and engineering," says Scott Kutz. "With *Design Squad*, I'm able to expose kids to an interest and passion they might not have had."

"With this class and *Design Squad*, I get to learn how to be creative and make things through real life problem solving," says Robert. Kalin agrees. "I would never have known I could do this without *Design Squad*. I'm not usually someone who would even think about using tools, but this project changed that."

The Build Big Contest challenged teams of kids, led by a mentor adult, to super-size one of *Design Squad's* 40 hands-on activities found online at PBSKIDSGO.org/designsquad. Entries were uploaded to YouTube, where they were judged by *Design Squad Nation* co-hosts Judy Lee and Adam Vollmer and *Design Squad* host Nate Ball for their originality and uniqueness of execution. As the Grand Prize Winner, Paul, Kalin, and Robert have won a Cisco UltraHD Flip Camera, to help document future builds, and a video chat with engineers and hosts of *Design Squad Nation*, Judy Lee and Adam Vollmer.

"We were amazed by the quality and creativeness of the submissions," says series Executive Producer Marisa Wolsky. "This contest helped reinforce our belief that with STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education and resources, kids are capable of building some amazing things."

In addition to the Grand Prize Winner, the judges also selected two runner-ups and nine finalists. Their entries included a solar powered hot tub, a bamboo boat, electromagnetic crane, and an entire living room made out of cardboard. All finalists have their creations featured on the [Build Big Contest page](#), as well as *Design Squad's* Facebook page www.Facebook.com/designsquadnation.

ABOUT DESIGN SQUAD NATION

Design Squad Nation is a spin-off of *Design Squad* for ‘tweens, teens, and family-viewing that airs on PBS KIDS GO!®. Over the course of 10 episodes, engineer co-hosts Judy Lee and Adam Vollmer traveled across the country and around the world, working side by side with kids to turn their dreams into reality. *Design Squad Nation* shows that engineering isn’t about hiding away in some lab; it’s about being active in the world, taking risks, collaborating with interesting people, and using science, math, and technology to solve real problems. *Design Squad Nation* takes a kid’s passion and combines it with engineering to create an array of engineering feats—a cake that is part delicious, part electronic, part mad scientist for the cast party of *Young Frankenstein: The Musical*; a pedal-powered bike organ; a human-powered flying machine, and more. *Design Squad Nation* shows kids that if they can dream it, they can build it.

Design Squad Nation is produced by WGBH Boston. Major funding for *Design Squad Nation* is provided by the National Science Foundation. Series funding is provided by the National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA), Northrop Grumman Foundation, and The Lemelson Foundation. Additional funding is provided by Noyce Foundation, United Engineering Foundation (ASCE, ASME, AIChE, IEEE, AIME), Motorola Foundation, and IEEE.

DESIGN SQUAD NATION ONLINE

The *Design Squad Nation* website is a destination for creative ‘tweens and teens, promoting the message: You are creative and can solve problems. You can make things that help people. We want you to join the *Design Squad Nation*. Let’s dream big. Let’s build something together. On the site, kids can work alongside co-hosts Judy Lee and Adam Vollmer, posting real-life solutions to real-life problems and responding to challenges from the show by sketching and building their own prototypes. The *Design Squad Nation* Blog features inspiring engineering and DIY content from across the Web, engaging with the *Design Squad Nation* community directly by including calls to action, how-to challenges, aspirational examples of kid-made content on the site, and first person video and messages from Judy and Adam—sharing both the fun and the failures that are a part of the design process. Already, more than 41,250 kids are engaged, actively creating and sharing content in our online community. *Design Squad Nation* invites the next generation of great thinkers to get involved at PBSKIDSGO.org/designsquadnation. Viewers also can follow *Design Squad Nation* on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/DesignSquadNation> and on Twitter at twitter.com/designsquad.

ABOUT WGBH BOSTON

WGBH Boston is America's preeminent public broadcasting producer—the single largest source of prime-time and children's programming for PBS and pbs.org, one of the most-trafficked dot-org websites in the world. WGBH produces some of public television's best-known lifestyle shows, many public radio favorites, and award-winning children's programs and websites that empower kids with innovative, entertaining, curriculum-based content. Among the WGBH-produced children's titles: *Arthur*, *Curious George*, *Postcards from Buster*, *Between the Lions*, *Design Squad Nation*, *Martha Speaks*, *FETCH! with Ruff Ruffman*, and *Peep and the Big Wide World*. WGBH also is a pioneer in educational multimedia, and in technologies and services that make media accessible to the 36 million Americans who rely on captioning or video descriptions. WGBH has been recognized with hundreds of honors: Emmys, Peabodys, duPont-Columbia Awards, and even two Oscars. In 2002, WGBH received a special institutional Peabody Award for 50 years of excellence. For more information, go to www.wgbh.org.

ABOUT PBS KIDS GO!

PBS KIDS GO! offers early elementary children the opportunity to explore new ideas and new worlds through television, online and community-based programs. For more information on specific PBS KIDS GO! content supporting literacy, science, math and more, visit PBS.org/pressroom, join our community online on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/PBSKIDSGO) and [Facebook](https://facebook.com/PBSKIDSGO), or visit PBSKIDSGO.org.

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MEDIA CONTACTS

Mike Wood, WGBH Boston, 617.300.5334, mike_wood@wgbh.org

IMAGE CONTACT

Jessica Hartzell, WGBH Boston, 617.300.5361, jessica_hartzell@wgbh.org

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