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Sue Murphy, State Director

Washington Science Olympiad

15112 W 3rd Addition Rd.

Cheney, WA 99004

Dear Ms. Murphy,

I am writing to express my interest and enthusiasm in serving as a board member for Washington State Science Olympiad, representing the Southwest Region.

I am a practicing gastroenterologist with backgrounds in basic and clinical research, and in teaching. I am a volunteer coach for both our local middle school and high school in Camas. I personally teach a couple dozen or more middle school and high school students via didactic and small group sessions. I do this almost weekly and throughout most of the year. I teach a variety of events including Anatomy and Physiology, Microbe Mission, Disease Detectives, Astronomy, Solar Power, Cell Biology, Bio Process Lab, Food Science, and others. I am also involved in writing exams and supervising events at invitational and state tournaments. I also teach our students how to write good exams, but there's always more to learn for me and the students!

I first became involved when my older child was a 6th grader in 2021 in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The online tournaments were a little sad because we didn't get to meet and compete against kids from other schools in-person, but our students still enjoyed these online tourneys immensely because they were held in-person at our school, where they could at least compete in-person alongside their teammates on the computer. Coming out of COVID-19 isolation and mandatory remote learning, this was a welcome change.

We became hooked when the live tournaments came back a year later in 2022. After my younger child also began to participate as a 5th grader for our middle school that year, it became a family affair and SciOly has brought us a lot of joy since. As there are so many events covering the full spectrum of the sciences, in addition to the build events, we love and value the diversity of subjects, as well as the high ceiling set to challenge the students. We became deeply involved and have been working to help foster a love of science and greater participation in SciOly amongst the kids in our community, as enthusiasm and participation suffered during the COVID-19 isolation. Having formed many close bonds amongst SciOly parents, students, and coaches, our SciOly family has grown even bigger. We have visited some of our past high school graduates at college invitationals, and it is gratifying to hear how SciOly has enriched their lives and helped them in their journey and education. We are very excited to be part of the greater SciOly community and can't wait until next season.

It is a lot of fun to travel to tournaments, and to see so many kids put the labor of their hard work and their love of science to the test. So many volunteers are needed to run a successful tournament, but everybody does their best to make it all work, for the greater goal of helping our kids grow into happy and dedicated adults who will help make the world a better place through science.

We are able to enjoy SciOly because of all the volunteers and those who came before us. I'd like to play a bigger role in order to give back to the SciOly community, and to help make our endeavor even better for everyone in the future. It is true that no tournament is ever perfect, but we will always aim to make things better, through collaboration and hard work, and by setting high standards.

I look forward to learning a lot from everyone on the board who have such diverse backgrounds and expertise to share, and I hope to do my part in making SciOly more fun and accessible to all of our children, as well as their coaches and parents.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Banny Wong

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