

Breaking Records: 100,000th Visitor to Finals in Knoxville!

Celebrating
100,000
Competition Visitors to Knoxville



We knew this year was a huge year for Destination ImagiNation, Inc. Global Finals. Now we know just how huge. It's busting at the seams!



The team representing 100,000 visitors to Knoxville Global Finals visited the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame during their day of adventure. (L to R: Jennifer McKenzie, Brianna Stanley, Alex Nesovic, Lizzie Anderson, Rowan Dionisopoulos, Steven Brault and Destination ImagiNation Board of Trustees Chair Nancy Wingenbach.)

On Tuesday, Destination ImagiNation welcomed the 100,000th visitor to global competition in Knoxville! Can you believe that if you added up the competitors who've competed at the global level over the years, you'd reach 100,000? Well, one lucky group believes it: The honor of being the 100,000th went to an entire team from San Diego, California.

This team, called Capital X, is a group of 7th and 8th graders from Parkway Middle School who competes in the *GuessDImate!* challenge. This is their second visit to Global Finals. Team members are Lizzie Anderson, Steven Brault, Rowan Dionisopoulos, Jennifer McKenzie, Alex Nesovic and Brianna Stanley, and they are coached by Lucy Nescovic and Curtis McKenzie.

"We had no idea we were going to be the 100,000th! We were so surprised!" Rowan said.

"Where are you taking us?" was the general question at the start of the adventure, and soon, they were to find out.

Such an extraordinary team received quite the VIP treatment. They were escorted—in a limo—to several stops in Knoxville. They visited the Holiday Inn Select Downtown, Knoxville Convention Center,



Team Capital X from San Diego is the 100,000th visitors to compete at the global level in Knoxville. They spent the day giving and getting gifts around Knoxville...but perhaps the best part was...they went in "limo style!"

Knoxville Hilton, Radisson Summit Hill, Women's Basketball Hall of Fame, Knoxville Tourism and Sports Corporation and Marriott, as well as Circle Park on campus. At each stop, the team received special gifts and, in return, gave away special "100,000th" t-shirts. At Circle Park, the students met UT Chancellor Loren Crabtree! (He's one of the top dogs at UT!) "He was a really cool guy," said team member, Steven.

Then it was on to a stuff-your-face pizza lunch at



UT Chancellor Dr. Loren Crabtree (center, back), extended an official UT welcome to Team Capital X and presented them with awesome books on penguins. (Hmmm...why penguins?)

Pizza Hut. Make way for the pepperoni!

Throughout the day, the team was given clues as to where their VERRRRY special final destination would be. Some of the clues were the word "Jello," a cold mug, a penguin book and paints, baby water toys and finger-painting paper. Hmmm. What could all of this add up to?

"We thought maybe we were going to swim in Jello with penguins!" said Brianna.

"Or we guessed that we were going to finger paint pictures of baby penguins...while we ate Jell-o," said Jennifer.

"This is way over my head," Lizzie joked.

The mystery was about to be revealed.

After stuffing themselves with pizza, the group hitched a ride again in the limo, which whisked them off to the Knoxville Zoo. There, the team met Knoxville Mayor Bill Haslam (too cool!), who presented the team with an incredible treat:

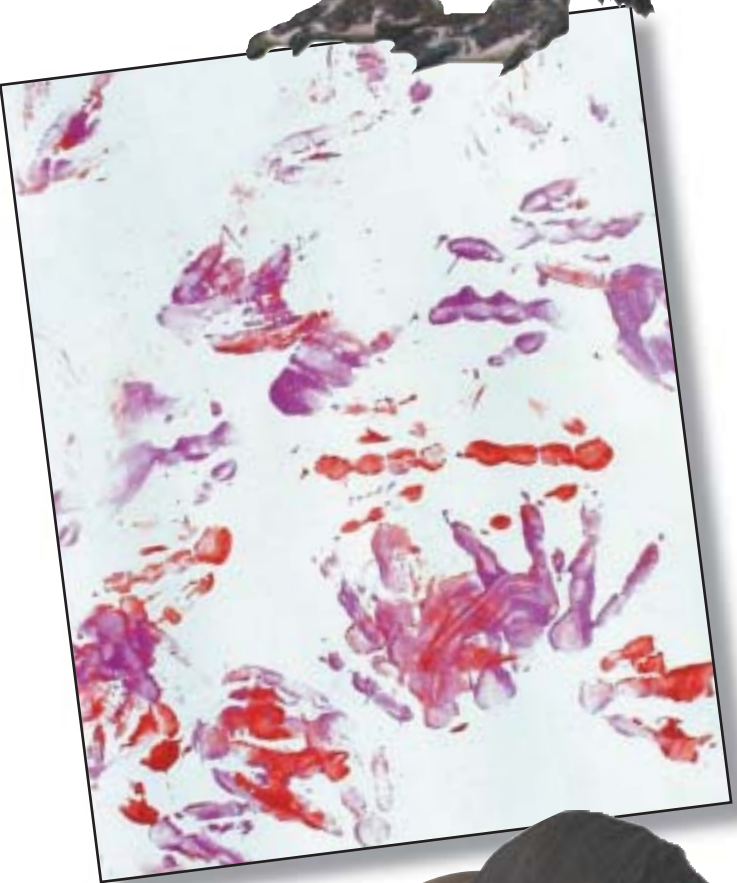


Adoption papers! The team was honored to officially adopt "Jello," the penguin, on behalf of Destination ImagiNation! Then they got a behind-the-scenes and very personal close-up look at the penguin habitat at the zoo. (Vombie will be thrilled to hear how happy his cousins are at the zoo's penguin habitat.)

The team presented the penguins with enrichment gifts—the water toys, paints and paper. But wait...paints and paper for PENGUINS? Yep, Jello the penguin is quite creative and artistic! To prove it, she gave our 100,000th visitors a totally awesome gift: A penguin portrait, painted by none other than herself, Jello! The painting was presented to Bob Purifico at Opening Ceremony last night and will be hung in the Destination ImagiNation headquarters in New Jersey. We love penguins!

Alex summed up the day: "Totally cool! We loved it!"

Whew! What a whirlwind day! Congratulations to Capital X for representing the 100,000th visitor to attend Global Finals in Knoxville! The count has already begun for the next 100,000th! Could it be you?



Hello, Jello!

