

Getting There

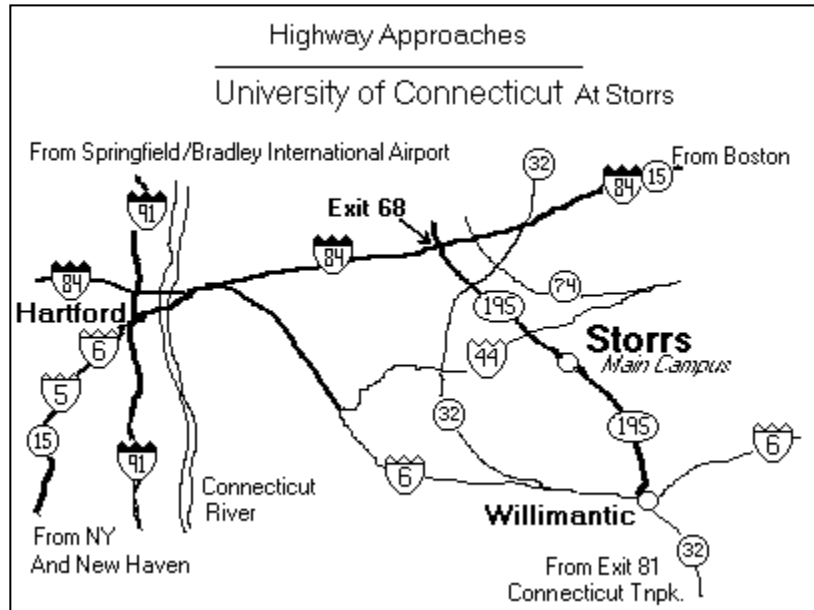
From Hartford, take I-84 East to Exit 68 in Tolland.

Travel south on Route 195 about 6 miles to the University (through the intersection of Routes 195 and 32, after about 4 miles, and through the intersection of Routes 195 and 44 -- known as Mansfield Four Corners -- after another 2 miles)

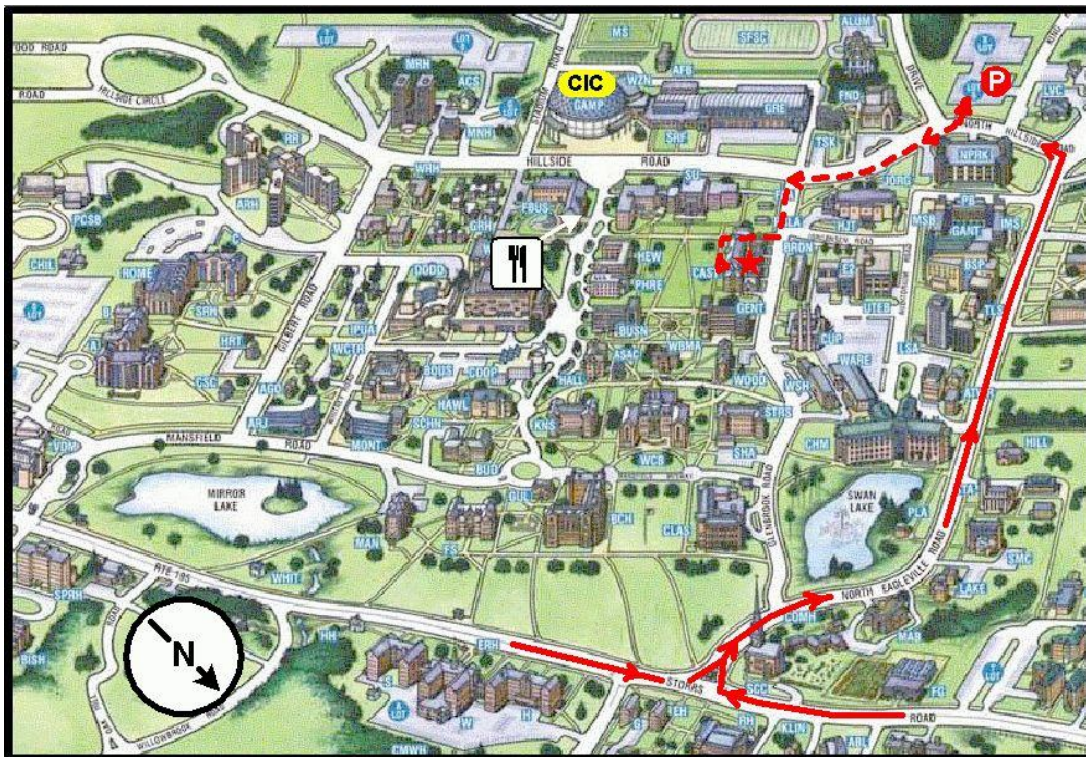
Continuing on Route 195, approximately 1 mile after the intersection with Route 44, take a right onto North Eagleville Road (solid red line in diagram below).

Proceed about a half mile and turn left onto North Hillside Road and park in Lot 9 on the right. Parking is free.

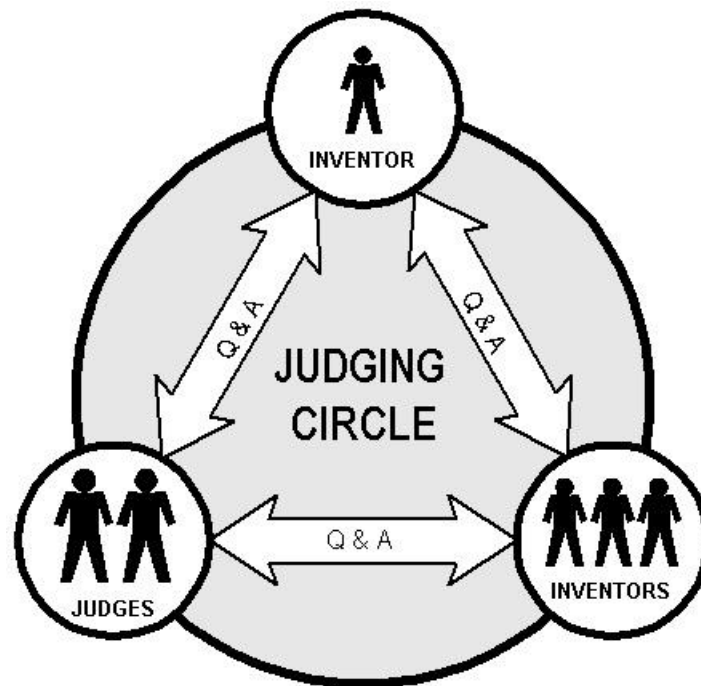
Walk to the F. L. Castleman Building (dashed red line in diagram). Enter on the courtyard side of the building.



CT Invention Convention at Gampel



Judging Circles



At the CIC, students are separated by grade into groups of 10 - 12. Each group will have at least two judges assigned to it, forming a "judging circle"

The CIC judging circle is a concept that seeks to involve the entire group of young inventors in a discussion of each invention, led by the judges. The purpose of the judging circle is to give students a forum to:

- Share their inventions and experiences
- Get feedback on their inventions from professionals and peers
- Learn about the inventions and experiences of fellow students
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the inventions and suggest improvements

Each inventor is expected to be in the spotlight for approximately 5-8 minutes, with all inventors in the group listening and discussing the invention under consideration at that time.

The judges will ask questions to guide the student who is describing his/her invention. Judges will also encourage the other students to question what they do not understand, to think of other uses for the invention, or to share their feedback on the invention.

The adult inventors, scientists, educators, and other practicing professionals who serve as judges bring a different perspective and level of expertise to the judging circle. They respond to the students' ideas from a professional "real world" point of view. It is this interaction that provides a unique learning experience for the students.

The judging circle will last approximately an hour and a quarter. Ultimately, the judges will select three students from each judging circle to recognize for excellence. We hope that if all students are led in a supportive and productive discussion, they will be able to understand why particular inventions were selected for special recognition.

Judging Criteria

Judging should be based on the following categories, weighted equally.

ORIGINALITY: How much creativity went into the invention? How challenging was the problem solved? Did the inventor develop a unique, unusual, or clever solution to the problem?

INVENTING PROCESS: How well did the inventor convey the steps taken to go from concept to invention and were the steps logical? Was the process well documented in the inventor's log book (Young children may use pictures or dictate information to someone)? Is there a clear explanation of the steps taken, including a description of the problem or goal, resources used, obstacles or failures, reasons for choice of materials, final design, and testing? Was credit given to those who helped?

What did the inventor do to find out if her or his idea was unique? This should yield an age-appropriate response: a young child might ask a number of people; an older child should explore catalogs, stores and related companies; a high school student might search the internet or even a patent database.

INVENTION EFFECTIVENESS: Does the invention solve the problem that was selected? Does it do what it is supposed to? Does it work even better than expected? Does it solve other problems, too? Note that you may be looking at a scaled-down model due to space limitations.

PRACTICALITY OF THE INVENTION: What advantages and disadvantages does the invention have compared to existing objects or methods that might solve the same problem? Is the inventor knowledgeable about these alternative solutions? How much thought was given to safety, ease of use, and choice of materials?

NEED FOR THE INVENTION: How important is the problem solved by the invention? Who benefits from it, many, few, or only the inventor? Does it serve a disadvantaged group, like the handicapped, the elderly, or animals? Is the invention more or less friendly to the environment than currently available products?

Scoring/Ranking

At the end of the judging circle, you and your fellow judge(s) must pick three inventors for recognition, in no order.

The method of rating the inventions is up to the judges. The only requirement is that you consider the above criteria.

A scoring sheet will be provided for those who wish to assign a score for each category (excellent - 10; very good - 8; good - 6; fair - 4; needs improvement - 2). Scoring is not required, however; it is a tool that you may choose to use. Note that it may be time consuming.

Some judges prefer to rank the top five or six inventions overall and then combine rankings with fellow judges to arrive at the top three.

However you decide to arrive at your three recognized inventors, your scores and rankings will not be seen.

Sample Questions for Students

To the inventor...

How did you come up with the idea for your invention?

Did you work on the first idea you thought of?

Did you have any problems with your invention?

Did you build any prototypes before this one?

Where did you get your materials/supplies?

Have you thought of ways to make your invention even better?

Once your invention was finished, did you test it? How?

If you had it to do over again, would you have done anything differently?

What are the similarities between your invention and other inventions in this judging group?

To the other students in the judging circle...

Do you understand the invention? Are there any questions?

Do any of you have the problem that this invention solves? Would it work for you?

Who would like to try this invention? What do you think about it? Does it work?

How might this invention help you or the people you know?

Can you find any problems with the invention? How could you [the inventor] fix the problems?

What are the similarities between this invention and that one?

To the very young inventors...

Did you have fun inventing?

What was more fun for you, thinking up your invention or building it and making it work?

Frequently Asked Questions

I am not an inventor. What can I say about the child's invention?

You can ask questions. You can get other students to respond to it and discuss the inventor's work. If possible, have another student try out the invention and see how well it works.

What if I don't understand the technical information presented?

The student has had to describe the invention before attending the CIC and should be able to explain it. Ask questions for your benefit and that of the other group members. Ask the other students to explain it in their words to confirm their understanding.

How much attention should I give to the display compared to the invention itself?

The display should help to clarify the invention and describe how the invention works and the problem it solves. Although many of our inventors use computers, photographs and other media to prepare their backboards, you should look for evidence of understanding and effort from the child.

What do I do with a child who is very shy or nervous?

Like many of us, some children are uncomfortable addressing a group. If this is the case, rather than having the inventor make a presentation, simply follow a question-and-answer format, which should be easier. Remember, your demeanor can help tremendously. If you approach the judging circle with enthusiasm, humor, and a casual style, this will help the students loosen up.

What about the inventor who has a poor model but a great idea?

Find out how much the child really worked on the invention. Did the student not have access to material that would have made a better invention? Did an initial invention take a lot of time, leaving less time for a second attempt? Did the invention or model break and was there an attempt to reconstruct it?

Suppose the invention does not work that day?

Assume that it had previously worked. This will be highly stressful for the child. You can ask him/her to explain as much as possible without the actual operation. Explain to the child that you understand the idea and that sometimes things just don't work out.

How much help are parents allowed to give children with their inventions?

Parents may support their child's effort by assisting them with dangerous tools, gathering materials, or supplying information. The creative work and design should come from the child.

Can we recognize more than three students from our group?

Selecting only three members from a group can be difficult, but we have a limited number of awards. Keep in mind that these students are representatives from their school and have been previously recognized in order to participate in the CIC. By all means, congratulate all your students on their work, so that they can all feel good about their accomplishments.

How do I interact with parents?

Parents are not allowed in the judging circles and should be reminded of that. Parents will return to pick up their children at the end of the judging circles, at which time you should be deciding on your three recognized inventors.

Judging Schedule and Reminders MAY 1st, 2010

Note: SPECIAL AWARD JUDGES SEE 9:15 BELOW

8:15 NEW JUDGES ONLY! Arrival and Registration (F.L. Castleman Hall)

Check in and pick up your judging folder at the registration desk. Refreshments are available. Orientation is at 8:45 in Room 212, facing the main entrance.

8:45 NEW JUDGES ONLY! New Judge Orientation (F.L. Castleman Classroom 212)

Donna Rand (Judge Trainer) will discuss judging criteria and answer any questions you may have about judging or about the day's schedule.

9:00 EXPERIENCED JUDGES Arrival and Registration (F.L. Castleman Hall)

Check in and pick up your judging folder at the registration desk. Refreshments are available. Orientation is at 9:30 in Room 212, facing the main entrance.

9:15 AM SPONSORED AWARD/SPECIAL AWARD JUDGES

Meet Special Judge Host, Helen Charov, at the main Speakers Podium in Gampel Pavilion for special instructions, letters of Awards for students, and other information that you may need. Do not go to Castleman Hall for Standard Judge Training.

9:30 ALL JUDGES EXCEPT SPECIAL AWARD JUDGES

Charlie Baumgartner, Judge Chair, will explain table assignments and selection process following judging.

NEW FOR 2010: GROUP/TABLE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU AT GAMPEL PAVILION THIS YEAR.

10:00 OPENING CEREMONY (Gampel Pavilion)

Proceed to Gampel Pavilion, to your RESERVED SEATING FOR JUDGES, for the opening ceremony. Judges will be introduced by profession. Judging assignments will be distributed.

10:45 - 12:00 JUDGING CIRCLES (Gampel Pavilion)

Greet your students and check their names against those on your roster. If you have a student who is not on your roster, and not in the same grade as your group, please take the student to a CIC official at the podium to clarify where he/she belongs.

Please distribute the Participation Certificates found in your judging circle. Ask the students to verify that all the information on their certificate is correct. Mark-up any the incorrect certificates and pass to a "runner" located at the end of each row. A corrected version will be brought back to you by the end of the judging circle time period.

Introduce yourself and tell them your occupation. Congratulate all the students on being selected to represent their schools at the CIC. These students need to feel they are the best of the best of their schools.

Give each student an opportunity to talk about their invention and to answer questions from you and from the other students in the group (at least 5 minutes per student). All students in your group need to listen to the presentations. Compliment any valid point you see in presentation, thought-process, and presentation. Try to keep everyone's throughout the judging circle and KEEP VOICES DOWN. Also, keep students from seeing your record sheets or from overhearing comments between judges.

After completing discussions, please let students know that you appreciate how much effort went into creating their inventions.

Please release students only after their parents have initialed (on the score sheet) for their release.

Parents in grades K - 2 may be seated in the bleachers throughout the process and can pick up students when your judging circle is completed.

In higher grades, bring students to the front podium so parents can pick-up their children.

12:00 - 12:30 Completion of Judging Evaluation

Connecticut Invention Convention – Judge Information

May 1, 2010 EVENT: Gampel Pavilion UConn Storrs Campus / TRAINING: Castleman Hall

You may want to review log books and displays as you confer with the other judge(s) in your group and select three recognized inventors from your group. Each of these three will receive the same award. Fill out their names on the Award Sheet and give it to Dave Klotz by 12:30 (located in "Judge Lounge" behind the southwest stands at court level). Please fill out the Potential Press Coverage Candidates sheet for those students possessing what you might consider TV Talk Show talent (humorous, extra smart, great idea, great presentation skills etc. Add comments about their abilities

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch and Public Viewing of Inventions

Lunch will be provided for you in the School of Business Building across Hillside Road from Gampel Pavilion. Use this time to network with other judges or you may stay at Gampel Pavilion to view all student inventions.

1:30 - 2:30 Closing Ceremony

You are invited (but not required) to join us for the awards presentation.

THANKS!