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Suburban teens snare top Web design honors

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BY [HOWARD WOLINSKY](#) Business Reporter

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Dmitry Barsky revamped and updated Notre Dame High School's Web site, staying on the cutting edge of computer design and attracting more than 14 million hits for the Niles school's hub for students, family members, prospective students and grads.

And Andrew Cichowski from Main South High School in Park Ridge built a Web site for a family friend's new supported-living facility, taking special steps to make the site senior-friendly.

Both 18-year-olds won top honors in the fourth annual "Web Developers of the Future" competition for Chicago area high school students sponsored by Hostway Corp., the Chicago domain-registration, Web-hosting, Web-design and online marketing services firm. The competition, which drew 30 competitors, is co-sponsored by Mayor Daley's Council of Technology Advisors and Junior Achievement/Chicago.

Barsky, who will be an architecture student in the fall at the Illinois Institute of Technology, came in first with his high school's Web site, [www.ndhsdons.org](#), serving the Notre Dame community. Last year, he was the runner-up in the competition.

He said he was encouraged to take on a redesign of the Web site by former Notre Dame tech teacher, Nate Wills. "The original Web site was quite hideous," Barsky said.

He freshened the look of the site and has kept enhancing the site with the latest in design.

John Lee, general manager and co-founder of Hostway, said, "The judges were impressed with the creativity that went into Dmitry's site. His use of technology went above and beyond what you'd expect. He applied sound design principles and project management. He did a great job."

Cichowski, 18, the runner-up, designed the Web site [www.plumcreek4seniors.com](#) as a marketing tool for Plum Creek, a family friend's supportive living residence in Rolling Meadows. He said he took into account the seniors who visit the site with larger than usual print, simple backgrounds and buttons to make it easy for seniors



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to print out pages and to find directions to the facility.

Cichowski, who has his own graphic design and computer repair company, will attend the University of California, Santa Cruz, where he will major in molecular, cellular and developmental biology and film.

Lee said, "What impressed us about Andrew's design was he kept his audience in mind. There is a tendency among some designers to include fancy elements without regards to the end user. Andrew's design shows a lot of maturity."

In a ceremony Wednesday, each student was awarded a laptop. Barsky received a \$1,000 scholarship, and Cichowski received a \$500 scholarship.

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