

Students showcase enterprising skills

DO YOU find Singapore too hot and humid? Use Slumber Oasis. It is a blanket that works like an air-conditioner – except that it does not cool the entire room but only your body.

Besides being cost-efficient – five times cheaper than an air-conditioner – the blanket is a power saver.

It uses six times less energy than a fan does and 60 times less power than an air-conditioner does.

The creators of this and other similar products are not scientists but local students, aged between 16 and 19 years.

Eighty students from various junior colleges, polytechnics and international schools across Singapore came together on Tuesday for the Port of Singapore Authority Singapore Global Enterprise Challenge 2005 (PSA SGEC '05).

Given \$30 and 24 hours, the students had to produce a prototype and a business plan for an environmentally friendly and commercially viable household product. They worked in teams of eight.

They were assigned businessmen and entrepreneurs from various companies as mentors.

Said KPMG Singapore partner Yap Chee Meng, who was one of the judges at the event: "There were some really innovative ideas (and) a lot of maturity in the way they approached those ideas, bearing in mind that the students are aged between 16 and 18.

"I was a pleasant surprise in terms of the maturity of thought, in terms of the ideas and the way that the 10 teams approached



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Members of Team Barcol Air, which emerged tops at the PSA Singapore Global Enterprise Challenge 2005, with their innovation.

the task."

The winning team – made up of members from Singapore, India and Iran and called Team Barcol Air – thought up a simply-designed lid targeted at changing people's mindset about recycling.

The lid has four different coloured rods joined at the centre, each represents a different material, such as perishables, plastics and paper.

There are pins on the four rods to clip the plastic bags for each section.

The team represented Singapore in the global competition – webcast live from Glasgow, Scotland – on the same day, but lost to Team Germany, which won the International GEC, and Team South Africa, which walked away with the Creativity award. – Dawn Quek