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Destination ImagiNation 2006 Story Ideas

+ **MEETING THE CHALLENGE:** Outrageously festooned hats, painted faces and outlandish costumes are all customary for DI's Global Finals, as is an astonishing display of creative problem-solving and innovation. Not only are students charged with designing solutions to problems most adults would deem daunting, but their creative solutions hint at a burgeoning awareness of self and the world around them. Team challenges will be held from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on May 25-26 and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on May 27 on the UT campus and the Knoxville Convention Center.

+ **ECONOMIC IMPACT:** DI 2006 will have an economic impact of more than \$20 million to the Knoxville-area economy, according to UT Conferences. The average participant will stay in Knoxville for 4.5 days. UT has hosted DI's Global Finals since 1991 and has a long-term commitment to host the event through 2012.

+ **LET'S GET TOGETHER:** Members from each participating state, province or country will parade their respective flags during a festive opening ceremony at Thompson-Boling Arena. DI President Robert T. Purifico will welcome 15,000 competitors, team managers, chaperons and supporters beginning at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 24.

+ **REPRESENTING THE VOLUNTEER STATE:** About 25 teams from the state of Tennessee will compete at DI, including East Tennessee teams from Farragut High, Alcoa Elementary and Indian Trail Middle School in Johnson City. The Tennessee state director for DI is Linda Chambers; her cell number is (615) 478-1880.

+ **FARRAGUT TEAM SAILS AHEAD:** A veteran team of Farragut High Admirals won the Tennessee state finals last month to advance to its fourth DI Global Finals. Team manager Nancy Dunning has worked with this creative bunch of problem solvers for eight straight years. (Dunning may be reached at NGDPT@aol.com.)

+ **PIN TRADING:** Trading lapel pins is a long-standing tradition at DI's Global Finals, with the more popular pins reappearing each year. The 2006 UT pins may be hot trading items. Adults get into the act as much as the competitors. But beware ... the second- and third-graders are tough negotiators.

+ **GRADUATION DAY:** Many of the students competing at DI's Global Finals skipped their graduation in favor of a trip to Knoxville. But DI officials have planned a special ceremony for them. A ceremony for elementary and middle school graduates is set for 6:30 p.m. on Friday, May 26, in the Alumni Memorial Building (Cox Auditorium). High school and college students may participate in a graduation ceremony at 8 that evening in the Knoxville Convention Center (Lecture Hall).

+ **GETTING 'READY FOR THE WORLD':** The University of Tennessee has embarked on an ambitious plan called "Ready for the World" to help students gain the international and intercultural knowledge they need to succeed in today's world. DI's Global Finals is a special showcase of diversity at UT. DI teams from more than 45 U.S. states and 15 countries around the globe are expected to participate.

+ **FEEDING & HOUSING THE MASSES:** UT Conferences will provide housing and manage meals for more than 8,000 participants. Some 850 teams are expected to compete with the average team consisting of six to seven youths and three adults. Participants will stay in UT residence halls and multiple downtown hotels. Contact: UT Conferences Director Robert Gibbs, 974-0250.

+ **TENNESSEE DI DAY:** UT Conferences will host Tennessee DI Day on Friday, May 26, for parents, educators and others interested in learning more about creativity and analytical-thinking skills for youth. The program begins at 10 a.m. at the Knoxville Convention Center. Educators, parents, professional trainers and researchers will share a brief overview of the DI program and how it can benefit young people. Participants will then join the DI teams for an outdoor lunch.

+ **PASSING OUT THE HARDWARE:** Competitors will gather one final time to learn which teams outwitted the others during an awards ceremony at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 27, at Thompson-Boling Arena.