



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



Eighteen Goose Creek CISD students vied for the title of spelling bee champion on Feb. 23 in the Baytown Junior School auditorium. The winner was Highlands Junior School seventh-grader Chinmayee Kulkarni. The word that gave Chinmayee the championship was "drapery."

Highlands Junior seventh-grader wins district spelling bee

Eighteen of Goose Creek CISD's brightest elementary and junior school students vied for the title of school district spelling bee champion on Thursday, Feb. 23 in the Baytown Junior School auditorium.

Each student earned a place on the stage, having won her or his school's spelling bee. Round by round, these top spellers were eliminated. After Round 1, there were 12 spellers remaining.

After Round 3, more than half of the spellers had been eliminated.

As it goes every year, some words were tricky or unusual.

"Scythe"

"Whimsical"

"Extemporaneous"

"Tentativeness"

"Tableau"

"Phylum"

"Wow. That was impressive," Goose Creek CISD Deputy Superintendent Dr. Byron Terrier told the young competitors afterward. "We are very proud of all of you."

Goose Creek CISD's top speller was crowned in Round 17 when there were four students still competing. The word that gave Chinmayee Kulkarni of Highlands Junior School the championship was "drapery."

For Chinmayee, it marked her third district spelling bee title in four years. She won back-to-back titles as a Victoria Walker Elementary School fourth- and fifth-grader. She finished second in last year's spelling bee.

The Highlands Junior seventh-grader will now represent Goose Creek CISD in the regional spelling competition in March.

Rounding out the top finishers, Stephen F. Austin Elementary School fifth-grader Abigail De Guzman finished in second place, and Victoria Walker Elementary School fifth-grader Soham Datar finished in third place. (He was last year's district champ.)

Chinmayee, 13, said she had worked extra hard this year after coming in second place last year.

She also wanted to thank her principal, Mr. Foxworth, assistant principals, Mrs. Wilson, and Mrs. Crawford, campus spelling bee coordinator Kathryn Dunlop, and her language arts teacher Mrs. Rankin.

"They are always supporting me and encouraging me to do my



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The secret to her success: Chinmayee practices spelling words every school night.

The next stop for Goose Creek CISD's 2012 spelling champ is the regional Houston PBS Spelling Bee on March 31. The champion of the Houston PBS Spelling Bee wins an all-expenses-paid trip to compete in the 2012 Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C., held in June.

After the spelling bee ended, each first place, second place, and third place winners from each campus spelling bee were presented their trophies by Dr. Terrier.

Here are the 2012 campus spelling bee winners:

Alamo Elementary — Julie Vargas, first place; Darius Dollarhide, second place; and Stephanie Barragan, third place.

Ashbel Smith Elementary — Robert Penafiel, first place; Justice Hudson, second place; and Brylor Cisneros, third place.

Austin Elementary — Abigail De Guzman, first place; Jaida Davis, second place; and Angel Gonzalez, third place.

Baytown Junior — Melissa Galvan, first place; and Shayna Smith, second place.

Bowie Elementary — Everett Crutchfield, first place; Yarezi Trejo, second place; and Andrea Torres, third place.

Carver Elementary — Armando Herrera, first place; Kayla Bannis, second place; and Justyn Valdez, third place.

Cedar Bayou Junior — Astrid Guevara, first place; Nathalie Martinez, second place; and Skyler Dowell-Littlefield, third place.

Crockett Elementary — Logan Runnels, first place; Aubren Payne, second place; and Cody Holder, third place.

De Zavala Elementary — Cherilyn Dudley, first place; Anette Islas, second place; and Jackson May, third place.

Gentry Junior — Nathan Kelley, first place; Eve Escarda, second place; and Cassandra Mouton, third place.

Harlem Elementary — Tina Phan, first place; Kayla Boham, second place; and Anjali Patel, third place.

...they are always supporting me and encouraging me to do my best.”

Born in India, Chinmayee and her family arrived in Baytown in 2005.

Chinmayee, the oldest daughter of Shishir and Kirti Kulkarni, enrolled in first grade at Lorenzo De Zavala Elementary School as a non-English speaking student.

As a third-grader — the first year students can participate — Chinmayee competed for De Zavala in her first spelling bee.

She's come in first three times and placed second once in the four years since.

Highlands Elementary — Jace Welch, first place; Samantha Peters, second place; and Anthony Ramirez, third place.

Highlands Junior — Chinmayee Kulkarni, first place; Sibeles Torres, second place; and Rachel King, third place.

Horace Mann Junior — Utkarsh Sharma, first place; Monica Martinez, second place; and Serella Slatt, third place.

Lamar Elementary — Joseph Martinez, first place; Jacob Benitez, second place; and Gabriela Hernandez, third place.

San Jacinto Elementary — Isaac Trejo, first place; Brianna Lopez, second place; and Jose Perez, third place.

Travis Elementary — Marissa Springer, first place; Kara Seaton, second place; and Ben Boyes, third place.

Walker Elementary — Soham Datar, first place; Jonathan Eastman, second place; and Salvador Oseguera, third place.

The Goose Creek CISD spelling bee is open to all students in grades three through eight, and is organized by Jessica Tracy, Coordinator of K-12 Language Arts, and her secretary Rosie Bocardo.

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