



GOOSE CREEK

CONSOLIDATED INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



Goose Creek CISD photo/Carrie Pryor-Newman

Victoria Walker Elementary School fifth-grader Chinmayee Kulkarni, left, won her second consecutive Goose Creek CISD Spelling Bee title on Wednesday, Feb. 17. Highlands Elementary fourth-grader Uriel Moreno finished in second place, and Austin Elementary fifth-grader Hanna Zerdo finished in third place.

Walker Wildcat snares her second spelling bee

Some of the words were unusual — not words used regularly — as 18 Goose Creek CISD students vied for the title of school district spelling bee champion on Feb. 17 at Lee College.

"Dungaree."
"Brigadier."
"Calisthenics."
"Irresponsible"

Goose Creek's top speller was crowned in round 11 when there were two students still competing. The word that gave Chinmayee Kulkarni of Victoria Walker Elementary the championship was "shrapnel." (Shrapnel, of course, is a shell containing lead pellets that explodes in flight.) For Chinmayee, it marked her second consecutive Goose Creek CISD Spelling Bee title.

"We are so very proud of Chinmayee. She is an excellent student and a wonderful speller," said Walker Elementary Principal Suzanne Keith. "She has been working diligently for this event and her hard work has certainly paid off! We are celebrating her success!"

The Walker fifth-grader will now represent Goose Creek CISD in the regional spelling competition in March.

Rounding out the top finishers, Highlands Elementary fourth-grader Uriel Moreno finished in second place, and Austin Elementary fifth-grader Hanna Zerdo finished in third place.

"My teacher, Mrs. Brock, had a big part in this," Chinmayee said. "I want to thank all my teachers and coaches at Victoria Walker because they have motivated and supported me so much. ... And I am proud to be a Ms. Keith Wildcat."

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 De Zavala as a non-English speaking student. As a third-grader — the first year students can participate — Chinmayee competed for De Zavala Elementary in her first spelling bee.

Since then, she has won two district spelling titles for Walker Elementary. The secret to her success: Chinmayee practices spelling words every school night for one to two hours with her parents.

Chinmayee says she is excited to represent Goose Creek CISD in the regional spelling bee again in March. Until then, she will be working even harder, spelling hundreds upon hundreds of words each week.

The next stop for Goose Creek CISD's 2010 spelling champ is the regional Houston PBS Spelling Bee on Saturday, March 27.

The champion of the Houston PBS Spelling Bee wins an all-expenses-paid trip to compete in the 2010 Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C., held in May.

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