

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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13-year-old captures Georgia's spelling championship

Akshat Gautam

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ATLANTA — They came from all corners of state; 20 spellers ranging from 9-14 - years-old, all with the same goal in mind – become Georgia's next spelling champion. After one hundred and twelve words through thirteen rounds, 13-year-old Akshat Gautam from South Forsyth Middle School in Forsyth County emerged as the winner of the 55th Annual Georgia Association of Educators State Spelling Bee. He will now represent Georgia in the Scripps National Spelling Bee Championships in Washington, D.C., May 24-26, 2016.

Late in the 11th round it was narrowed down to Akshat and 14-year-old Neil Patram from Alton C. Crews Middle School in Gwinnett. Neil went first and was given the word "viridity," but he spelled it with an "e" rather than an "i." Askhat then received the word "teratology," which he spelled correctly and then received the word "vaporetta." He calmly spelled it correctly and became Georgia's spelling champion. The fourth, fifth and sixth

rounds proved to be the undoing for most of the contestants with words such as polemology, coloratura, suffumigate, and electuary .

Akshat was just like any other teenager in his shy response to winning. "I feel very happy and fortunate to win," he said. "All of my hard work paid off and now I'll have to put more effort in studying for nationals."

"I can't say enough about what these young people have accomplished," said GAE President Dr. Sid Chapman. "Everyone associated with their efforts should be very proud and on behalf of GAE and I congratulate each and every one of them. Our thoughts and prayers are with Akshat and his family as they travel to Washington to represent Georgia and to attempt to win the national championship."

In addition to his first place trophy and an all expense paid trip to the national championship and \$1,000 (GAE), Akshat also received an iPad Mini and a \$100 Amazon gift card (Horace Mann Insurance Companies), a Kindle Fire (Best Buy of Cumming, GA), a dictionary (Merriam-Webster), a one-year online subscription (Encyclopaedia Britannica), one \$100 U.S. Savings Bond (Samuel L. Sugarman Award) and a GAE Bee Champion lapel pin. Neil, as runner-up, took home a second place trophy and \$500 (GAE), and also received an iPad Mini along with a \$50 Amazon gift card (Horace Mann Insurance Companies) and a dictionary (Merriam-Webster). In addition, all contestants will receive a GAE State Bee lapel pin.

You can continue to follow our champion through the Scripps National Champions at #GAEBee16.

Order of elimination-County/word/Round:

Jules Passmore: Thomaston-Upson	Olympian	1
Kaylee Scarbary: Fannin	amnesia	1
Aylah Birks: Twiggs	innate	1
Breanna Riley: Clayton	lozenge	3
Patrick Patricio: Paulding	bravura	3
Thomas Corbitt: Lowndes	muslin	3
Aya Haddad: Gwinnett	aggrandizing	4

Ceylan Milor: Fulton	polemology	4
Grace Flanders; Berrien	coloratura	4
Callie Goins: Cherokee	glycerol	4
Cathy Nguyen: Chatham	facile	4
Catherine Grace Sigman: Duluth	bollard	5
Catherine Knight: Chatham	vassal	5
Rebecca Kenney: Houston	suffumigate	5
Jet Rawls: Newton	electuary	6
Elelna Gilbertson Hall: Clarke	metallurgy	6
Asmita Saraswat: Cobb	pharmaceutics	8
Matthew Spalding: Fulton	inculcate	11
Neil Patram: Gwinnett	viridity	13
State Champion Akshat Gautam: Forsyth	vaporetto	13

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