

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 17, 2017

11 year-old from Gwinnett captures Georgia's spelling championship

Abhiram Kapaganty

**GAE President Dr. Sid Chapman
presents trophy to Abhiram**

ATLANTA — They came from all corners of state; from Fannin County to Twiggs and Glynn to Thomas and points in between -- 20 spellers ranging from 10 to 14 - years-old, all with the same goal in mind – becoming Georgia's next spelling champion.

After over 200 words through 23 rounds, 11-year-old Abhiram Kapaganty from Burnette Elementary in Gwinnett County emerged as the winner of the 56th Annual Georgia Association of Educators State Spelling Bee. He will now represent Georgia in the Scripps National Spelling Bee Championships in National Harbor, Maryland., May 28 - June 3, 2017.

In the 20th round it was narrowed down to Abhiram and 13-year-old Jahnvi Bhagat from Daniell Middle School in Cobb County. After both of them missed word in rounds 20-22,

in the 23rd Jahnvi received the word "vorlage" but spelled it with an "f" instead of "v." Abhiram then received the word "schipperke," that he spelled correctly. He then received the word "wedel" which he quickly dispatched to become Georgia's 2017 spelling champion. .

Abhiram was just like any other middle-schooler in his response to winning. "I feel really good about going to nationals. I have never been to the Washington area." He was also concerned about the amount of attendees who were in previous bees. "I thought I wasn't going to win because so many others were in the spelling bee last year."

“Congratulations to all of these great young people who impressively represented their respective schools and communities in today's contest,” said GAE President Dr. Sid Chapman. “They, their parents, teachers, coaches and everyone who directly or indirectly helped them or cheered them on, should be very, very proud. Our thoughts and prayers are with Abhiram and his family as they travel to Maryland to represent Georgia and the national championship.”

In addition to his first place trophy and an all expense paid trip to the national championship and \$1,000 (GAE), Abhiram also received an iPad Mini and a \$100 Amazon gift card (Horace Mann Insurance Companies), a Kindle (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. Jahnvi, 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 #GAEBee17.

View contest pics at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/gaecomm/albums/72157679579411841>

Wedel

23

Order of elimination-County/word/Round:

Aylah Birks - Twiggs	Quesadilla	4
Za'Miriya Sneed - Thomas	Junco	4
Brandon Webb - Calhoun City	Succotash	5

Jon Liu - Lowndes	Embarcadero	6
Gio Christian Ramos - Chatham	Vapidity	6
Krish Modi - Thomaston/Upson	Solace	8
Thurman Blake, Jr. - Clayton	Hoick	8
Rebecca Kenny - Houston	Exigible	9
Matthew Spalding - Fulton	Minestrone	9
Griffin Lee - Glynn	Panary	9
Aditi Shankar - DeKalb	Nisi	9
Charlie Gandy - Cobb	Epistrophe	9
Jet Rawls - Newton	Sanicle	9
Chloe Carter - Fannin	Hircine	9
Arul Selvakumar - Fulton	Vireo	9
Vaibhav Mishra - Laurens	Fluoroscope	10
Sophie Fang - Cobb	Reniform	16
Aya Salma Haddad - Gwinnett	Autophagy	20
Jahnvi Bhagat - Cobb	Vorlage	23

State Champion

Abhiram Kapaganty - Gwinnett

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