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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **2023 District Science Fair Winners**

*Students from all district schools showcase their scientific knowledge and creativity*

PITTSBORO, NC (December 6, 2023) – Chatham County Schools held their 2023 District Science Fair last night at Northwood High School. The students and their projects were very competitive this year, with several entries winning awards. There were 176 total student projects this year, up from 132 projects in 2022.

This is the first time since 2017 that all district schools were represented at the Science Fair. The students' work honored during the ceremony is a true example of real life problem solving, critical thinking, inquiry and project based learning.

The overall science fair winner, who received a \$100 prize, was Vickie Lian from Chatham Early College, whose project was "Investigating Gender Bias in AI Chatbots." Lian also won first place in the Grades 9-12 Technology Science Division.

CCS is very appreciative of the 27 highly qualified judges who dedicated their day to evaluating the entries. Judges could award honorable mention, third place, second place and first place in each category. First-place projects in Grades 3-12 will proceed to the Regional Science Fair at North Carolina A&T State University on February 10.

"Each year our Science Fair gets better! This is a special process and event that truly sparks interest and excitement among our future leaders. It also provides a great opportunity for our community to come together and celebrate our future scientists," said LaShonda Hester, executive director of Middle School Instruction. "We are thankful for our students and their hard work, our staff, our community partners that served as judges, and our parents. We are proud of all of our students and wish the 1st place winners the very best as they move on to the NC Regional Science Fair to be held in February."

Even though the projects from grades K-2 do not move on to a regional or state competition, Chatham County Schools has chosen every year to offer this category because the district believes it's valuable for students and for their growth in and love of science.

Sherri Homan, the Instructional Program Facilitator for Middle Schools, coordinates the district science fair each year, and she will also be helping prepare for the Regional and State competitions.

Here is the complete list of winners from the district science fair, separated out by grade and division:

## **Grades K-2**

### **Grades K-2 division**

#### 1st Place (tie)

- "How Much Battery Power Does it Take to Light an LED" by James Crawford from Pittsboro Elementary
- "What does Andreas Like" By Alex Mavropoulos from Chatham Grove Elementary

#### 2nd Place

- "Bring the Solar Heat" by Bernadette Foreman from Pittsboro Elementary

#### 3rd Place

- "Do You See What I Hear" by Madison Williams from Chatham Grove Elementary

#### Honorable Mention

- "Designing for Disabilities" by Ms. Marlette's Class from Perry Harrison Elementary
- "Melting Rainbows" by Norah Gangway from North Chatham Elementary
- "Keep Calm and Rake On" by Ms. Hodge's class from Perry Harrison Elementary
- "What Do Worms Eat" by Ms. Rosenfelder's Class from Pittsboro Elementary

## **Grades 3-5**

### **Grades 3-5 Biological Sciences Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Yeasty Beasties” by Gwen Frankowski from Chatham Grove Elementary

2nd Place

- “Take a Look What You’ve Done, cuz baby now we got Bad Bloom” by Abigail Bidding and Caroline Owens from North Chatham Elementary

3rd Place

- “What is in That?” By Nyla Cooper from Virginia Cross Elementary

Honorable Mention

- “Dye-Lemma with Food” by Ava Peterson from Bennett School
- “Seeping into Celery (Which Dye Has the Most Negative Effect)” by Emily Bingle from Pittsboro Elementary

### **Grades 3-5 Earth and Environmental Science Division**

1st Place

- “Fog Catchers: Which Size is the Most Efficient” by Keaton Jett and Audrey Jett from Chatham Grove Elementary

2nd Place

- “Egg-cellent Exploration” by Beckett Neal from Bennett School

3rd Place

- “Leaf it to Me” by Beckett Sranek from North Chatham Elementary

Honorable Mention

- “What is the Best Light to Charge a Solar Powered Car” by Lauren Plante and Weston Longpre from Pittsboro Elementary
- “Plastic Bottle Hand Fan” by Maci Aguilar Lima from Siler City Elementary

### **Grades 3-5 Chemistry Division**

1st Place

- “Hidden Messages” by Claire Palmer from Bonlee School

2nd Place

- “Stretchy Things” by Jordan Dickson, Caitlin Corcoran, and Emma Suczynski from North Chatham Elementary

3rd Place

- “The Water Fountain Test” by Jesse Ritter from Bonlee School

Honorable Mention

- “How Different Drinks Affect Teeth Enamel” by Jaxon Dixon from Silk Hope School
- “What is the Best Amount of Contact Solution to Make Slime” by Kate Beebe from Chatham Grove Elementary

- “How to Design Your Slime” by Luz Ramirez Hernandez and Jeremiah Burnett from Bennett School

### **Grades 3-5 Engineering & Technology Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Windmill Creators” by Abigail Lemmon, Isabella Williams, and Jack Walker from Perry Harrison Elementary

#### 2nd Place

- “Turn it Up!” by Solon Holland from Bonlee School

#### 3rd Place

- “Designing Knee Braces” by Arley Ricker, Ella Barthel, and Diane Lopez Ramos from Perry Harrison Elementary

#### Honorable Mention

- “The Science of Softball” by Ava Moore and Carisa Andrew from Bennett School and Silk Hope School
- “Silent Danger” by Sydney Wolfe from North Chatham Elementary
- “Jack in the Pulpit” by Jaxon King and Eloise Kellish from Perry Harrison Elementary

### **Grades 3-5 Physics/Math Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Air Quality in Chatham Grove Elementary” by Luisa Riveros and Kathryn Gwennap from Chatham Grove Elementary

#### 2nd Place

- “Do You Dare to Cross a Quicksand?” by Bella Alfaro from North Chatham Elementary

#### 3rd Place

- “How Do Different Substances Dissolved in Water Change Its Surface Tension?” by Emma Heath from Chatham Grove Elementary

#### Honorable Mention

- “Electromagnetic Current” by Abalaye Cissokho from Perry Harrison Elementary
- “Heated Competition: What Has More Effect on Heat Absorption Heat or Color?” by Wyatt Lawson from Pittsboro Elementary
- “What Makes a Curveball Curve?” by Leo Stewert from Chatham Grove Elementary

## Grades 6-8

### **Grades 6-8 Biological Sciences A Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Feeding Time, Farmer Brown!” by Abigail Brown from Chatham Middle School

#### 2nd Place

- “How Does Length of Studying Affect Performance” by Titiana Escobar Umanzor, Ashley Lopez, and Oscar Rangel from Chatham Middle School

#### 3rd Place

- “Hydroponics Tower” by Jackson Butcher from Moncure School

#### Honorable Mention

- “Who Has Better Memory, Male or Female?” by Ava Moser and Ella Parks from Silk Hope School

### **Grades 6-8 Biological Sciences B Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Is DNA found in Processed Food?” by London Bryant from Margaret B. Pollard Middle School

#### 2nd Place

- “Let’s See if Coffee Makes You Type Faster” by Abigail Herrera and Carmelima Beasley from Chatham Middle School

#### 3rd Place

- “How Can Water Affect Student’s Education?” by Griselda Escobar Humanzar and Roselin Medina Paredones from Chatham Middle School

### **Grades 6-8 Chemistry Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Cereal Chemistry: Uncovering the Hidden Iron” by Nicolas Triglianos from George Moses Horton Middle School

#### 2nd Place

- “7 Cell Battery” by Youseff Reyad, Noah Fuller, and Kinley Sanders from Margaret B. Pollard Middle School

#### 3rd Place

- “How Will Sugary Teeth Affect Teeth?” by Madilyn Bolejack from George Moses Horton School

#### Honorable Mention

- “Elephant Toothpaste Chemistry” by Caylee Spivey and Ava Zawada from George Moses Horton School

### **Grades 6-8 Earth and Environmental Science Division**

#### 1st Place

- “What Do Macroinvertebrates Tell About the Health of Western Chatham Waterways?” by Reagan Sandel, Kinley Jordan, and Maddy Smith from Chatham Middle School

#### 2nd Place

- “Do ‘Biodegradable Balloons’ Biodegrade?” by Megan Leonard from Moncure School

#### 3rd Place

- “The Dangers of Not Having an Ozone Layer” by Vanessa Sifuentes and Yoselin Rincor from Chatham Middle School

#### Honorable Mention

- “Which Gems Are Harder?” by Matthew Ferrin, Brodie Schwartz, and Greyson Saint-Claire from George Moses Horton Middle School
- “Are the Water Tributaries Polluted?” by Ashley Trombley from George Moses Horton School
- “Ice, Ice, Melting” by Maxie Mitchell from Silk Hope School

### **Grades 6-8 Mathematics, Statistics, & Data Science Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Is IXL An Effective Source?” By Sam Zwehelan, Rhett Bailey, Aidan Corcoran from Margaret Pollard

### **Grades 6-8 Physics Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Arrow Speed” by Finley Dolleschel from Moncure School

#### 2nd Place

- “Is Sailing Downwind the Fastest Strategy?” by Alexa Whitworth from Margaret B. Pollard Middle School

#### 3rd Place

- “Floating or Sinking, Simple Right?” by Elias Keshy from Margaret B. Pollard Middle School

#### Honorable Mention

- “Potato Battery” by Eva Lawson and Jeremy Castro from Chatham Middle School

### **Grades 6-8 Technology Division**

#### 1st Place

- “How Does Deforestation Affect Carnivores and Herbivores?” by Ben Galbraith, AB Lucas Rodriguez and Henry Patten from Moncure School

#### 2nd Place

- “Can Humans Recognize AI?” by Nathan Weidman and Stella Weidman from Margaret B. Pollard Middle School

#### 3rd Place

- “Does Humidity Affect A 3D Printer?” by Ellen Calvez from Margaret B. Pollard Middle School

### **Grades 6-8 Engineering Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Time for Take Off!” by Aubrey Hunnewell and Peyton Sipe from JS Waters School

#### 2nd Place

- “Building a Model to Predict Coin Age?” by Paxton Sramek from Margaret B. Pollard Middle School

#### 3rd Place

- “Battle of the Batteries” by Jackson Scott and Lucas Youngman from JS Waters School

## **Grades 9-12**

### **Grades 9-12 Biological Sciences A Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Age Affects Brain Proficiency” by Sophe Hayes, Claire Oglesbee and Mariah Rudolph from Chatham Early College

#### 2nd Place

- “Methods of Controlled Breathing in High Stress Environments” by Athena Phan, Dominick Pietryga and Kayle Maxfield from Chatham Early College

#### 3rd Place

- “Can Personality Be Predicted by Music Preference?” by Logan Joyner and Genesis Ocampo from Chatham Early College

### **Grades 9-12 Biological Sciences B Division**

#### 1st Place

- “The Effect of Sugar Levels on Fermentation” by Emmanuel Hernandez Castaneda from Jordan-Matthews High School

#### 2nd Place

- “Does Color Affect The Way We Feel Toward Food?” by Aaliyah Barfield from Northwood High School

#### 3rd Place

- “Daily Effects on Blood Pressure” by Jake Bowden from Jordan-Matthews High School

#### Honorable Mention

- “Heart Rate” by Madelaine Lazano from Jordan-Matthews High School

### **Grades 9-12 Chemistry Division**

#### 1st Place

- “From Murky to Pure: Analyzing Advanced Approaches to Water Purification” by David Baruch Ocana and Zuyai Hernandez Perez from Chatham Central High School

#### 2nd Place

- “Acidic or Basic” by Hannah Culberson and Eleanor Reece from Jordan-Matthews High School

#### 3rd Place

- “Luminol” by Courtney Caviness, Bristol Ferguson, and Harley Norton from Chatham Central High School

#### Honorable Mention

- “How Does Water Purity Affect Surface Tension?” by Asher Savage and Eli Minges from Northwood High School

### **Grades 9-12 Earth and Environmental Sciences Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Water Filtration” by Anthony Santiago and Yazmine Lopez-Munoz from Jordan-Matthews High School

#### 2nd Place

- “Solar Oven Cooker” by Joshua Basurto San Juan and Jason DePaz Rodriguez from Jordan-Matthews High School

#### 3rd Place (tie)



- “Plant Growth with Rowan and Colton” by Rowan Fisher and Colton Adams from Northwood High School
- “Tempo on the Track” by Natalie Boecke and Morgaine Eller from Northwood High School

### **Grades 9-12 Physics Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Using Photometry to Measure the Transit of TOI-519b and WASP-18” by Fiona Xiao, Clair Orvis, and Ellie Walker from Seaforth High School

#### 2nd Place

- “Effects of Density on Temperature Rise” by Wilson Hinshaw from Chatham Central High School

#### 3rd Place

- “Pendulum’s Mass Verses Period of Oscillation” by Cristian Lopez Coronado from Jordan-Matthews High School

### **Grades 9-12 Technology Science Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Investigating Gender Bias in AI Chatbots” by Vickie Lian from Chatham Early College

#### 2nd Place (tie)

- “AI vs Human” by Jy’Mir Fuller from Jordan-Matthews High School
- “Student vs AI” by Rebecca Hoopes from Northwood High School

#### 3rd Place

- “Temperature’s Impact on Tennis Balls Bounce” by Dulce Hernandez Preciado from Jordan-Matthews High School

### **Grades 9-12 Engineering Science Division**

#### 1st Place

- “Flying Balls” by Kelton Fuquay from Jordan-Matthews High School

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