

## 2007 National *You Be The Chemist* Challenge

The 2007 National *You Be The Chemist* (YBTC) Challenge was held on June 15 at the [Chemical Heritage Foundation](#) in Philadelphia, PA. Students from grades 5-8 came from around the country to participate in two days of fun activities, sight-seeing... and a Challenge!

On June 15, Brook, a sixth grader from Reading, PA, won the title of National *You Be The Chemist* (YBTC) Challenge Champion for 2007. Brook and eleven other anxious contestants gathered at the Chemical Heritage Foundation (CHF) in Philadelphia, PA, geared up for a challenge! Coming in second place was Alex, an 8th grader from Mount Prospect, IL and third place winner was Christopher, a 7th grader from Elk Grove Village, IL.



The other contestants were Stephanie, an 8th grader from Houston, TX; Caity, an 8th grader from Pentwater, MI; Taylor, an 8th grader from Aston, PA; Morgan, a 7th grader from Knippa, TX; Sarah, an 8th grader from Duncan, OK; Dylan, a 7th grader from Brandenburg, KY; Genevieve, an 8th grader from Sterling Heights, MI; Ryan, an 8th grader from Charlotte, NC; and Clay, a 5th grader from Fort Mill, SC.

This year's national competition was sponsored by AIG Environmental of New York, NY, a division of American International Group; Arch Chemicals, Inc. of Norwalk, CT; Expo Chemical Company, Inc. of Houston, TX; and Thames & Kosmos of Portsmouth, RI. "CEF is providing critical leadership for science education through its YBTC programs," stated Laura Tew, Director of Stakeholder Relations for Arch Chemicals, Inc. "The YBTC Challenge, which Arch Chemicals is proud to sponsor, offers students the opportunity to study beyond their classroom curriculum and compete with their peers on a national-level. For local communities, this program forges collaboration between schools and local chemical industry sponsors, who can provide guidance into careers in science and chemistry," she added.

Judges for the event were Carol Jones, Science Consultant for Macomb County Intermediate District in Clinton Township, MI; Charlotte Osborne, Director of Marketing for AIG Environmental in New York, NY; and Paul Russo, Professor of Chemistry at Louisiana State University (LSU) in Baton Rouge, LA.

Sharing the responsibility of moderating the event were three students from the LSU Student Affiliates of the American Chemical Society (SAACS) – Lisa Brown, Amin Hamideh, and Rebecca Vidrine. Michael DeLee, also a member of SAACS and Heather Okimoto, Administrative Coordinator for CEF, served as official scorekeepers.

The audience, which consisted of almost eighty family members and chemical industry representatives, was on the edge of their seats as the participants battled through five rounds of questions before Brook was declared winner. The first, second, and third place winners will all receive educational savings bonds from CEF. All participants received a CHEMC3000 chemistry set, a gift certificate to the



Discovery Channel Store, a gift subscription to *National Geographic Kids* magazine, and YBTC Challenge lab coats, t-shirts, book bags, water bottles, pencils, and note pads!



The historical charm of downtown Philadelphia was the back drop for the two-day event. In addition to the academics of the competition, students, parents, organizers and sponsors were also able to participate in different activities around the city. They were lead on a tour of the historical artifacts of CHF, spent an afternoon exploring the Franklin Institute, and were treated to dinners at Dave & Buster's and the historical City Tavern.

Now going into its fourth year, this academic question-and-answer competition has tripled in size since its start. More YBTC Challenges sites are already lined up for the 2007-2008 Challenge year. "The National YBTC Challenge demonstrates the outstanding capability of our young people in the field of chemistry," stated Chet Murphy, Vice President, Market Development for Brenntag North America, Inc. and organizer of the Berks County (PA) YBTC Challenge, the site from which the winner, Brook, emerged. "The CEF programs have done a superb job of sparking an interest in chemistry for our younger generation. As a major global chemical company, Brenntag is acutely aware of the need to promote education in chemistry and the sciences. There is a shortage of interested students in higher education pursuing a career in chemistry, so uncovering this interest and desire at a young age will provide long term benefits to our industry, and our society at large," he added.



The number of companies and communities involved in the YBTC Challenge will only continue to grow. CEF wants your community involved in the excitement! For more information on how easy it is to sponsor a Local Challenge in your area, please contact the CEF staff at 703/527-6223.

**Read the official [2007 National YBTC Challenge press release!](#)**

*\* Challenge competition images courtesy of Douglas A. Lockard Photography.  
(Event activity images provided by CEF staff.)*

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**For more information or to share your thoughts about the National YBTC Challenge, contact us at:**

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