

Students test science knowledge at competition

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The chemistry questions arrived in waves, testing the knowledge of more than 30 students during the You be the Chemist Challenge event Thursday at the Dow Academic Center.

Five rounds and almost 50 questions later, only two remained for the Championship Round.

Rasco Middle School student Neha Krishnan and Angleton Junior High student Nicholas Soria sat on opposite sides of the auditorium and stared up at the projector while the multiple-choice questions flashed across the screen.

The questions asked about hydrogen, binary compounds, calculating the mass of certain objects and how many liters were in 50 milliliters of a solution.

After the resulting tie, the students entered a final, single-elimination round to determine the champion.

The deciding moment arrived three questions later, when they were asked, “Which of the following is true of elements in the same group on the periodic table?”

Both paused for several seconds, then once again lifted a card into the air displaying a letter that represented their answer.

Krishnan lifted “C,” indicating that both have the same number of electrons in their outer energy, and soon discovered the answer made her the competition’s last student remaining.

With the result announced, the middle schooler embraced her mother, Bindu Krishnan, who sat in a chair near the adjacent wall as she watched the event.

“I’m overwhelmed,” Bindu Krishnan said. “I know she worked very hard.”

The 30 fifth- through eighth-graders competing Thursday represented six schools at Brazosport ISD and Angleton ISD. It was the second year for the Dow-sponsored event, which is geared to promote chemistry to students in a fun and challenging environment.



Be The Chemist Challenge

Contestants listen as the first question of the second annual Be The Chemist Challenge is read aloud to them Thursday at the Dow Academic Center.

“We’re looking forward to doing it again, and making it bigger and better than ever,” said Gabriella Cone, Dow community affairs manager.

Between rounds, three Dow employees stood on a stage and showed the students various experiments.

While Krishnan took home the trophy Thursday, the top five finishers from the event all move on to the State Challenge in Houston, which takes place in April.

“I’m really excited,” Neha Krishnan said. “I know I’ll have to study even more.”

The additional finalists were Scott Kessler of Lake Jackson Intermediate, Hans Aggarwal of Rasco Middle School, and Nathan Cloeter of Lake Jackson Intermediate.

All participants received certificates for getting to that point, while finalists received trophies and other gifts.