

QUIZ KIDS STRUT THEIR SCIENCE

LI students vie for national bowl berth

BY JEAN-PAUL SALAMANCA
jeanpaul.salamanca@newsday.com

The next generation of scientists went head to head Saturday against their peers from high schools around Long Island for a chance to compete on the national level.

For the 28th year, Brookhaven National Laboratory in Shirley played host to the Long Island Regional Middle School Science Bowl. A competition coordinated by the U.S. Department of Energy, the science bowl featured 20 teams made up of more than 100 students representing 12 schools across Nassau and Suffolk.

Teams spent the day answering questions in subjects ranging from physics to life science, mathematics, chemistry and

more in a round robin-style competition. The winning team will go to the National Science Bowl, held in Washington, D.C., in late April.

Children at the competition buzzed with excitement as their teammates answered questions from the judges. However, the science bowl was also a gateway to inspire local youths to pursue science at the lab, according to Amanda Horn, senior educational program representative at Brookhaven National Laboratory.

“We’re trying to create a path for them to come back to the lab when they’re older as high school students, whether they’re participating in our high school research programs, as undergraduate students, as a lab intern or even as future scientists or engineers here at the laboratory or at other national laboratories around the country,” Horn said.

Siddharth Gilra, an eighth-

grader at defending champion Great Neck South Middle School, said his team was having a lot of fun, having won three of their first four competitions by midday.

“We learned a lot of new things because of the different types of questions we had,” said Siddharth, who wants to be an engineer.

Erin Wong, 11, a sixth-grader at Great Neck Middle School, had big shoes to fill, as her brother had captained the team that won the competition last year.

Erin said her brother had given her some advice on how to prepare for the competition, such as staying calm while answering questions. Between his advice and her family’s support, Erin said she learned a lot and enjoyed herself along the way.

Danielle Davey, a science teacher at the upper school of Harbor Country Day School in



Aidan Clarke, Tyler Byrne, Justin Harper and Michaelangelo Scialabba, eighth-graders in Stony Brook, at the Science Bowl.

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St. James, said her students, who were competing in their first science bowl, had been meeting twice a week to do practice rounds.

“They’re so excited to be a part of this,” Davey said. “This is giving them a different arena to shine other than sports. It’s working as a team and being excited to learn about science and showing what they’ve learned.”

The winners of Saturday’s competition were:

- First place: Great Neck South Middle School
- Second place: Robert Cushman Murphy Junior High School, Stony Brook
- Third place: Longwood Junior High School, Middle Island
- Fourth place: Harbor Country Day School

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