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### **Georgia middle and high schoolers to compete nationally for top history honors**

About 60 students from around Georgia are headed to Washington, D.C., to present their historical research projects for National History Day. Held June 12-16 at the University of Maryland in College Park, the annual Kenneth Behring National Contest serves as the national finals for student winners from each state and several countries.

Participating students from Georgia attended public and private schools, as well as homeschools, from Atlanta, Chamblee, Columbus, Cumming, Doraville, Eatonton, LaGrange, Lilburn, Locust Grove, Loganville, Marietta, McDonough, Sharpsburg, St. Simons, Thomasville, Thomson, and Woodstock. In order to advance to the national finals, the students competed and won judging rounds at regional and state contests.

In April, National History Day Georgia welcomed to the campus of Mercer University a record 521 middle and high school students, their teachers, and families for the state contest. These students had previously taken top honors at regional competitions held at Augusta University, Clayton State University/National Archives Atlanta, Coastal Georgia Historical Society/College of Coastal Georgia, East Georgia State College, Fort Valley State University, Georgia College, Georgia Southwestern State University, Kennesaw State University, Thomas County Schools, Troup County Archives/LaGrange College, and the University of Georgia.

Laura McCarty, co-state coordinator, notes, "We are grateful to our partners for providing opportunities for teachers and students to get involved with this program. A growing number of teachers, schools, and school systems have chosen to do National History Day. The number of participants statewide has nearly doubled over the past three years."

Students presented papers, websites, documentaries, and performances focusing on the theme "Exploration, Encounter, Exchange in History" to a team of 110 volunteer judges (also a record number). Many categories had so many entries that a second round of judging was required.

At the awards ceremony, teachers Hollie Queener of St. Anne-Pacelli School in Columbus and Rebecca "Becky" Yount, a National History Day alumna, of the Scholars Guild in Lilburn received the Patricia Behring Teacher of the Year Awards. "National History Day is very much a teacher-centered program, as they guide the students through historical research and entry development. These two teachers are marvelous examples of the process, and it is good to be able to recognize them and to say 'thank you' for their commitment," says Laura McCarty.

Co-state coordinator Kevin Shirley adds, "Using technology provided by LaGrange College, we conducted 22 web based-sessions with members of the Georgia delegation. Our qualifiers did excellent work throughout the year, but what really impressed me was their desire to continue working on their projects. They are a highly motivated, passionate group of students of whom Georgia can be proud."

Soon after the national competition, National History Day 2017 will begin, with the theme "Taking a Stand in History." A few spots still remain for teachers in the "Bootcamp: NHD in the Classroom" workshop, to be held July 11-14 at LaGrange College. For more information, or to register, see <http://www.lagrange.edu/academics/history/nhd/teacher-registration.html>.

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#### **About National History Day in Georgia**

National History Day in Georgia is a program of Georgia Humanities and LaGrange College, in partnership with Mercer University. For more information, please visit <http://www.lagrange.edu/academics/history/nhd/index.html>.

#### **About Georgia Humanities**

Georgia Humanities is a statewide nonprofit organization working to ensure that humanities and culture remain an integral part of the lives of all Georgians. Serving the citizens of Georgia through cultural and educational programs, grants, and projects, Georgia Humanities encourages engagement with the history, stories, and ideas that inform our lives, so that we can make better decisions for the future. Founded in 1971, Georgia Humanities is the statewide affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and one of the first humanities councils founded in the nation. For more information, please visit [www.georgiahumanities.org](http://www.georgiahumanities.org).