

February 22, 2007

Science Fair Shows Off Student Skills at Bryant Elementary

Students in Kindergarten through Eighth Grade at Bryant Elementary School, 60th Street and Cedar Avenue in West Philadelphia, showed off their brainpower in a Science Fair during Black History Month.

More than 100 students, working in teams or as individuals, developed experiments and built exhibits describing them for the judges, graduate students and post-doctoral researchers from the University of Pennsylvania and University of the Sciences.

Science teacher Sarah Elder led the way, coaching students to build a range of exhibits. Ms. Elder came to Bryant through Teach for America, and has enjoyed working at the school so much that she stayed beyond her required tenure. It was the first time in Ms. Elder's tenure that the school hosted its own Science Fair, and the eight iPRAXIS Scienteer judges agreed it was a big hit.

Kindergarten students worked together to find the answer to a key question: How many raisins do you get in a bran cereal?

To get the answer, students counted the raisins in random samples of Kellogg's Raisin Bran®, Post Cereal's competing product, and a generic brand, purchased from a local supermarket. The Post product won out, with many more raisins than the other two, by the way.

Another winning entry, by third graders, tested how well different brands of detergent cleaned stains for different types of fabric. The students assembled their collection of swatches, labeled them, and rigorously tested each detergent product on the same type of stains. Judges all agreed that the third graders had followed the scientific method to the "T."

Still another Best in Show was the student Battery Test. Consumer-minded students in the upper grades wanted to know which dry-cell batteries would hold up the longest when playing electronic games. So they set up a test: regular alkaline AA batteries vs. rechargeables. And you know what? The regular batteries won out hands down, holding their charge longest through continuous use. They were cheaper, too.

Bryant Science Fair Winners

K-1st grade

Winner:

Room 107—Mystery Bubbles

Honorable Mention:

Room 102—Colors

2nd-3rd grades

Winner:

Room 209—The Tide's Out!

Honorable Mention:

Room 203—Mold on Bread

5th grade

Winner:

Aluminum Foil vs. Plastic Wrap—Noella Kelly

Honorable Mention:

Double Decker Pendulum—Zaya and Ann

6th grade

Winner:

Lakia Melton—Deodorant

Honorable Mention:

Quadir Whitney—Battery Power

7th grade

Winner:

Energy Drink—Anthony Robinson, Carl Finger, Rhafeeq Smith, Raphei Daniels, Koran Johnson

Honorable Mentions:

Which Detergent Works the Best?—Latasha Melton, Kiara Medley, Tykeira Carpenter

8th grade

Winner: Can You Light It?—Harriet Hudson, Sydney Williams, Shenika Walker

Honorable Mentions:

Energy Charge—Amber Alkhatib, Mercedes Bradley, Costalianna Conway

Fruit DNA—Kyle Reavis, Seth Marant, Richard Cherry, Malik Miles

What Makes an Egg Float—James Jones and Domineic Johnson

Gum—Devon Barlow