



STATE CHAMPIONS — The Laurens District High School Academic Team recently participated in the State Championship in Academics competition at Winthrop University, where they became number one in the state. Pictured are, back row, from left, Laney Stokes, Hannah Godfrey, Jessica Putman, Wil Armstrong, Nytavious Bennett, Lleyton Abell, Isabella Conlin, John Bettger, WPEC Coordinator Brenda Schrantz; front row, Ronan O'Dell, Senator Mike Fanning, Ethan Sharp, Jordan Pitts, Robert John, and Coach Garrick O'Dell.

LDHS academic team wins state championship

On March 29, the Laurens District High School (LDHS) Academic Team became number one in the state after completing competition at Winthrop University for the State Championship in Academics. South Carolina has historically been active and competitive in quiz bowl tournaments through the National Academic Quiz Tournaments (NAQT). In 2014, S.C. Senator Mike Fanning and others initiated a playoff system similar to athletic playoffs with schools competing in their respective regions, and then the regional champions advance to compete at state. The idea is to generate enthusiasm and recognition for academic accomplishment equal to that of athletics. LDHS competes as part of the Western Piedmont Educational Consortium (WPEC), which includes these high schools —

Clinton, Emerald, Greenwood, Abbeville, Ninety-Six, Laurens, Batesburg-Leesville, Mid-Carolina, Saluda, and Ware Shoals. LDHS began competing in 2015 and qualified for the state tournament four times in the last five seasons, placing third, second twice, and now first at the state level. In the final two rounds at the state meet, they defeated Nation Ford, a perennial contender for the NAQT National Championship, and then Wilson High School, the former state and national champions and home of Ben Ingram, one of the winningest competitors ever to appear on Jeopardy! All matches were intense, with the semi-final coming down to the final questions of the fourth quarter. Coach and LDHS English teacher Garrick O'Dell had this to say about the teams' performance, "I could

not be more proud of the intensity, dedication, and drive my players have displayed this year." The State Championship Team included Frank Lleyton Abell, James Wilson Armstrong, Nytavious Devon Bennett, John Leon Bettger, Isabella Conlin, Hannah Rae Godfrey, Robert John, Ronan Benjamin O'Dell, Jordan Lee Pitts, Jessica Jane Putman, Ethan Ashby Sharp, and Laney Renee Stokes. Every championship team needs an MVP. For the LDHS Academic Team, the choice was clear as Nytavious Devon Bennett, on an individual basis, outscored every player on both teams in every match all season long. Of course, Bennett reminds us that it was a team effort and he is grateful to have been a part of this team's accomplishments.

U.S. Attorney's Office to host job fair, expo to help secure employment for individuals with criminal records

United States Attorney Sherri A. Lydon has announced that the United States Attorney's Office; the South Carolina Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services; S.C. Works; S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation; S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce; S.C. Department of Social Services; and the United States Probation Office are continuing their statewide partnership to help individuals with prior criminal backgrounds secure employment. The Third Annual Greater

Upstate Reentry Job Fair and Expo will be held Wednesday, April 10, 2019, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., at McAlister Square, located at 225 South Pleasantburg Drive, Greenville.

This job fair, which is intended as a resource for Upstate residents, is part of a series of events held annually in Florence, the Midlands, the Lowcountry, and the Upstate. The partner organizations have tailored the expo to help people with a criminal record overcome the particular obstacles they face after return-

ing home. The fair and expo will include area employers friendly to hiring individuals with a criminal background and other organizations who provide resources for returning citizens.

Professional dress is required. As always, the event will feature workshops on how to seek expungements and pardons of prior criminal convictions.

Interested employers or vendors should inquire with Diana Goldwire at 864-315-9751 or dgoldwire@dew.sc.gov.

Musgrove hike slated for April 6

On Saturday, April 6, at 9:30 a.m., at Musgrove Mill State Historic Site will be offering a guided hike of the battlefield trail. The Battle of Musgrove's Mill, which occurred on Aug. 19, 1780, was a vital turning point in the Patriot's fight for independence on the South Carolina Backcountry. This Ranger-led hike will cover the 1.5-mile battlefield trail, during which you will learn about why the battle was fought at Musgrove Mill, who participated, and what occurred during the battle.

The cost of the hike is just \$2.00 a person.

Please wear appropriate clothing and footwear for hiking and bring bottled water.

Reserve your spot by contacting the park at 864-938-0100, or mgmillsp@scprt.com.

For more information, contact the park at 864-938-0100, mgmillsp@scprt.com or visit www.SouthCarolinaParks.com.

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LEC names youth trip winners

Victoria Bass, Amber Goolsby, and Jaimeen Shah are the winners of an expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. sponsored by Laurens Electric Cooperative.

They will travel with other South Carolina students to the nation's capital where they will join more than 1,400 students from across the country. The nation's electric cooperatives sponsor the one-week event each June.

Local students to spend a week in Washington, D.C.

The students attending this year's Washington Youth Tour to represent Laurens Electric Cooperative, called delegates, are Victoria Bass, daughter of Stephanie and Greg Bass of Taylors, Amber Goolsby, daughter of Walter and Margaret Goolsby of Mauldin, and Jaimeen Shah, son of Ketan and Ragi Shah of Simpsonville.

The delegates were selected from a group of high school students who completed an application and were interviewed by a panel of judges. They will be among more than 40 other young people from all over the state participating in the tour to the nation's capital city, June 15-20.

During their stay in Washington, the students will visit with their representatives and senators and tour sites of historical significance.

Youth Tour participants from 39 states will meet in Washington, D.C. for the tour, which has been conducted for more than 40 years.



Victoria Bass



Amber Goolsby



Jaimeen Shah

NO JOKING!!!

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