

2019 National Geographic GeoBee Pennsylvania State Competition Semifinalist Press Release

Norwin Middle School Student Advances to Pennsylvania State Competition of the National Geographic “GeoBee”

The National Geographic Society has announced that Conner Bollinger, an eighth-grade student at Norwin Middle School, advanced to the semifinals of the 2019 National Geographic GeoBee Pennsylvania State Competition. The contest was held at The State Museum of Pennsylvania in Harrisburg on Friday, March 29, 2019.



Conner Bollinger

This was the second level of the National Geographic GeoBee competition, which is now in its 31st year. School GeoBees were held in schools with fourth- through eighth-grade students throughout the state to determine each school champion. School champions then took an online qualifying test, which they submitted to the National Geographic Society. The National Geographic Society invited up to 100 of the top-scoring students in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense Dependents Schools and U.S. territories to compete in the State GeoBees.

Conner, who is the son of Janet and Gary Bollinger, has long been interested in geography, according to his teachers at Norwin Middle School.

“Conner is an outstanding student who prides himself on his excellence in geography,” said Mr. Dylan McElfresh, Conner’s social studies teacher at Norwin Middle School this year. “He regularly demonstrates his skills by connecting historical events to their geographical location through the impacts they each create on the other. Geography is just one of Conner’s many strengths in the social studies classroom.”

Norwin Middle School social studies teacher Ms. Kristen Ummer is the school Bee coordinator. She works with fellow social studies teachers to organize and hold the preliminary rounds of the school bee. Then, she conducts the final round of the school bee with the winners from the preliminary rounds.

“The middle school was very proud to send Conner to the state level of the competition,” Mrs. Ummer said. “While Conner was not the winner of the state level competition, the Norwin community was proud to have such a strong contender represent our school district. The questions students must answer to advance through the rounds are quite challenging. Many adults might be stumped by some of the questions!”

The National Geographic GeoBee is an academic competition that was developed by the National Geographic Society in 1988 to promote geographic knowledge among young people in the United States. Students in grades 4-8 from nearly 10,000 schools participate annually for a chance to win college scholarships. During more than three decades, 120 million students have learned about the world through participation in the GeoBee.

How would you fare as a National Geographic GeoBee contestant? At the school GeoBees this year, students had to answer questions like these:

At more than 100 miles in length, Long Island is the longest barrier island in which state—Kentucky or New York?

New York

Which state is *closer* to the Gulf of Mexico—Virginia or Arkansas?

Arkansas

It takes about 90 days for a drop of water to travel the length of the Mississippi River. The Mississippi River starts in Minnesota and flows 2,340 miles south to its outlet in which state—Louisiana or South Carolina?

Louisiana

The Magdalena River, the principal river of Colombia, flows through the city of Barranquilla near the Caribbean Sea on which continent?

South America

Which animal famous for its tusk spends most of the winter months under the sea ice in Baffin Bay between Canada and Greenland—emperor penguin or narwhal?

narwhal

Which country does not include part of the Kalahari Desert—Namibia, Botswana, or Eritrea?

Eritrea

Commercial flower bulb production is an important economic activity in what country just north of Belgium?

Netherlands

Located near the Green Mountains, Montpelier is the capital of which state?

Vermont

Constructed during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, St. Basil's Cathedral is located in Moscow in which country?

Russia

The Alboran Sea and the Ionian Sea are both part of which larger sea?

Mediterranean Sea