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DOE's National Science Bowl Draws Two Area Schools

Calloway County Middle School and Lone Oak High School will compete starting this weekend in the Department of Energy's National Science Bowl in the Washington, D.C., area.

Each of the five-student teams won regional competition in Paducah in February. They received expense-paid trips to the National Science Bowl, America's largest and most prestigious science competition for middle and high school students. It is the only educational event and academic competition that is sponsored by a federal agency.

Middle and high school teams will compete nationally in math and science, while middle school teams also will race battery-powered model cars they have designed and built. Last year, Paducah Middle School was national runner-up in the car race.

Finalists from the weekend competition will compete again Monday for the championships.

Calloway County squad members are excited about the trip but a little nervous about the plane ride, said Scott Pile, academic team coach.

"We have been practicing pretty extensively on building the lithium-ion battery-powered car," he said. "It has been a challenge for the students, but our working model is ready to go."

Pile said the students faced many car-related challenges, such as determining the best gear ratio, what to build the chassis from, axle placement, and wheel selection.

Both the Calloway and Lone Oak teams have been practicing for the fast-paced, question-and-answer competition. Lone Oak started rehearsing four days a week in mid-March after the Regional Science Bowl and Governor's Cup competitions ended, coach Charles Fountain said.

"I'm very eager about the overall team challenge for different types of experiments," Fountain said. "The students learn the science behind the science."

Three seniors on the Lone Oak team competed in the National Science Bowl two years ago, he said

Science Bowl teams will tour parts of the nation's capital when they aren't competing. Pile said the Calloway team will also visit the USA Science and Engineering Festival.

DOE launched its National Science Bowl competition in 1991 to encourage high school students to excel in science and math and to pursue careers in those fields. The National Science Bowl's high school competition now involves more than 13,000 students. DOE introduced the National Science Bowl's competition for middle school students in 2002. It now involves more than 5,000 students.



Champion Calloway County team: Back row, from left: Coach Beth Morehead, Martin Mikulcik, Sam Morehead, Jaewon Kang, Coach Scott Pile. Seated, from left: Bobbi Brashear, Claire Umstead.



Champion Lone Oak High School team: Back row, from left – Garrett Garneau, Nikolas Anderson, Ricky Grewelle, Coach Charles Fountain. Front, from left, Parijat Sharma, Rana Edem.