



OHIO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Ohio Chamber Hosts 2024 Ohio Civics Bee



Ohio Chamber President & CEO Steve Stivers stands with Destiny Nshimiye, Katarina England and Aarit Koul, the three finalists of the 2024 Ohio Civics Bee.

COLUMBUS, OHIO – The Ohio Chamber of Commerce recently held the second annual Ohio Civics Bee state finals at Ohio State University’s Ohio Union in Columbus. The event was held in partnership with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and The Civic Trust.

Leading up to the competition, middle school students from across the state submitted a 500-word essay on their ideas for improving their communities. From these essays, judges chose 20 finalists to compete in each of the four regional competitions that were hosted by local chambers of commerce. The top five finalists at each regional competition answered follow-up questions about their essays, and the top three from each were invited to compete at the state finals.

Twelve students sat onstage at the state finals, competing first in two rounds of multiple-choice questions that tested their knowledge on civics and government. The five students with the highest scores moved on to the final round, then presented the essays they had originally submitted to qualify for their local competitions.

Judges Dr. Jozef “Jos” Raadschelders, Professor at the John Glenn College of Public Affairs at Ohio State University, Jessica Voltolini, Chief of Staff for the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, and Eric Kearney, President & CEO of the Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky African-American Chamber of Commerce, asked each finalist follow-up questions about their essays before determining which students were awarded first, second and third place.

Aarit Koul, who is from Jackson Township and is entering 8th grade at Jackson Memorial Middle School, won first place. He presented on the topic of excessive screen time. He was awarded \$3,000. Koul also won first place at last year’s competition.

Katarina England, who is from Dayton and is entering 8th grade at Dayton Regional STEM School, won second place. She spoke about run-down neighborhoods. She was awarded \$1,000.

Destiny Nshimiye, who is from Uniontown and is entering 9th grade at Hoover High School, won third place. Her topic was community impact. She was awarded \$2,000. Nshimiye won second place at last year’s competition.

The Ohio Civics Bee was modeled after the National Civics Bee, which is an initiative that seeks to encourage more young Americans to engage in civics and contribute to their communities. The competition in Ohio aimed to help middle schoolers become better informed about American democracy, engage respectfully and constructively in the community, and build greater trust in others and institutions.

Koul will travel to Washington D.C. to compete for the national title on November 12.

The Ohio Chamber is the state’s leading business advocate and represents thousands of companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

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