

Black History Quiz Bowl



Staff photos by Sara A. Reid

Akilah Banks Alexander flashes a smile. Alexander won in the quiz bowl's 9- to 12-year-old age group.



Taylor Faison, left, holds the microphone for Marc Callende as he attempts to answer a question during the Black History Quiz Bowl at Market Fair Mall. To see a slide show of pictures from the event, visit the Observer's Web site at www.fayobserver.com.

Contestants draw on their knowledge of the past

By Sarah A. Reid
Staff writer

Brother and sister Danielle and Rodney Anderson were not excited when their mother told them she had signed them up for a Black History Quiz Bowl.

But then the teens learned they could win \$300 each.

"I am going to school next year," Danielle, a 17-year-old senior at Douglas Byrd High School, said matter-of-factly. "I need to buy things."

With \$300 in small bills spread out between them and the other finalists in their age group in the middle of Market Fair Mall, the Andersons had all the motivation they needed to come in first.

Danielle fought her way through one round against Kanisha Blake to win her cash prize in the 8th annual quiz bowl.

Her brother bested three others and took on the winner of the first 13-year-old to 15-year-old round.

Christian Academy was stiff competition for Rodney. But he beat her by one question.

"I knew other people were going to study a lot," Rodney said. "But I felt I knew most of them. The dates are probably the hardest part."

Rodney, a 14-year-old freshman at Village Christian Academy, studied the nine pages of questions two hours a night with his sister and mother, he said.

His mother, Linda Anderson, made flash cards, he said. She put the cards that the teens answered incorrectly into a pile, which they had to study more intently.

The brother and sister said they didn't start studying until a week before the quiz bowl.

Akilah Banks Alexander, the winner of the 9-year-old to 12-year-old category, studied for weeks with her teachers, friends and relatives, she said.

"They weren't really hard," she said about the questions.

for Akilah was figuring out what to buy with her winnings. The seventh-grader said she wasn't sure what she would purchase.

The Andersons said they would be spending their money on clothes.

Joe McGee, the organizer and sponsor of the event, said he hoped to increase the cash prize to \$1,000 per category next year, depending on donations.

McGee started the quiz bowl through his nonprofit GOTDAD Inc., a father-focused parenting and community outreach organization. Through the quiz bowl, McGee said he wanted to help educate people about black history.

"For when you truly know your past, you know you have a place in the future," he said.

For more information about the event, visit www.blackhistoryserver.com.

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Rodney Ancerson, left, one of the quiz bowl winners, stands with Master of Ceremonies Joe McGee, winners Akilah Banks Alexander and Danielle Anderson, and judge Val Jones.