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## Top Delaware Students Earn Honors at 2016 National History Day Contest

*Delaware Historical Society announces the 2016 National History Day Delaware winners.*

Wilmington, DE — Students from across the state competed at the **2016 Kenneth E. Behring National History Day Contest** at the University of Maryland in College Park, MD June 12-16, 2016. Forty-eight students competed in the national event, which is often likened to the “science fair” of history education. The **Delaware Historical Society** is the sponsor of the National History Day in Delaware program, which serves as a powerful educational tool to cultivate an interest in history, develop research skills, build presentation skills, and foster confidence among other benefits.

The 2016 Outstanding Entries for Delaware are Eleni Staikos from P.S. duPont Middle School, who won the Individual Junior Exhibition category for her project entitled “The Antikythera Mechanism: Exploring & Encountering the Heavens, 100 B.C.,” and Natalie Ng and Abigail Houseal from Padua Academy, who won the Group Senior Exhibit category for their exhibit called “Nellie Bly: Not Just a Journalist.”

Each fall, more than half a million students nationwide begin the yearlong project-based National History Day program competing in a series of history contests in their local districts and states. The top students are selected for participation in the national contest. In Delaware, 230 students competed at the State level this year, and 53 were selected to move onto Nationals, which was a slight increase over 46 students chosen last year. The Delaware Historical Society has a commitment to increasing the number of student participants to support history education in Delaware.

“National History Day instruction in the classroom provides students with a skill set which they will use all throughout their academic careers and even into their professional and personal lives long after,” said Kelly McMillan-Whitaker, a P.S. DuPont Middle School teacher and a Patricia Behring Teacher of the Year Award winner for Delaware. “It teaches students to think deeply about significant topics in history, through close reading and analysis of primary sources. Furthermore, NHD teaches kids how to take what they've learned and express it in a way that makes sense to them. Research, reflection, and communication skills such as these will help our students become participatory citizens of the world.”

Earlier this year, Robert Gabrick of Padua Academy (senior division) and Kelly McMillan-Whitaker of P.S. duPont Middle School (junior division) were both named as Patricia Behring Teacher of the Year Award winners for Delaware. As winners of this award, Gabrick and McMillan-Whitaker were nominated for the national award, which is granted to one junior division (grades 6-8) and one senior division (grades 9-12) teacher who has shown outstanding creativity, commitment, and inspiration in developing student interest in history education.

Delaware students and teachers can find out how to participate in National History Day by contacting Rebecca Fay, the State Coordinator in Delaware at [rfay@dehistory.org](mailto:rfay@dehistory.org), and by visiting <http://dehistory.org/national-history-day>.

**About the Delaware Historical Society:**

The Delaware Historical Society owns and operates the Delaware History Museum; a nationally recognized Research Library; Old Town Hall; Willingtown Square, four 18th-century houses surrounding a picturesque urban courtyard located in Wilmington; as well as the Read House & Gardens located in historic New Castle, recognized as an “American Treasure” by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Park Service; and The Center for African American Heritage, which will be included as part of the expansion of the Delaware History Museum, to reopen in October 2016. For more information on the Delaware Historical Society, call (302) 655-7161 or visit [dehistory.org](http://dehistory.org).

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