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**POWER OF THE PEN ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF DISTRICT WRITING TOURNAMENT
HOSTED VIRTUALLY BY GAHANNA MIDDLE SCHOOL SOUTH**

NORTH CANTON, OH — February 27, 2022 — North Canton educational nonprofit Power of the Pen today announced the results of the South-Central Ohio Region District 2 tournament hosted virtually by Gahanna Middle School South on February 12. The Kiwanis Club of Gahanna sponsored the tournament.

In the Power of the Pen district tournament, 7th- and 8th-grade students competed in a series of extemporaneous rounds of creative writing tasks, each in response to an open-ended prompt. The district tournament is both a team and an individual competition.

Team award winners in the 7th grade are:

- 1st Place – St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin, coached by Shelley Regrut
- 2nd Place – Eversole Run Middle School, Plain City, coached by Jennifer Schafer
- 3rd Place – St. Matthew School, Gahanna, coached by Melissa Mengos

Team award winners for the 8th grade are:

- 1st Place – St. Brigid of Kildare, Dublin, coached by Sara Hardin
- 2nd Place – St. Matthew School, Gahanna, coached by Anita Ference
- 3rd Place – Dr. Henry Karrer Middle School, Dublin, coached by Jennifer Wolf

7th grade top individual award winners are:

- 1st Place – Andrew Meng, Dr. Henry Karrer Middle School
- 2nd Place – Marinda Pope, St. Brigid of Kildare
- 3rd Place – Colleen Harper, St. Brigid of Kildare
- 4th Place – Saisiddhi Chutkay, Eversole Run Middle School
- 5th Place – Shirley Gui, Eversole Run Middle School
- 6th Place – Andrew Zhang, John Sells Middle School
- 7th Place – Corey Williams, Gahanna Middle School West
- 8th Place – Lauren Bliss, Ann Simpson Davis Middle School
- 9th Place – Yabisera Teferra, Holy Spirit School
- 10th Place – Katelyn Ray, St. Matthew School
- 11th Place – Alexa Xiang, Dr. Henry Karrer Middle School
- 12th Place – Ella Armstrong, Columbus School for Girls

8th grade top individual winners are:

- 1st Place – Emily Mifsud, St. Brigid of Kildare
- 2nd Place – Lily Marrocco, Willard Grizzell Middle School
- 3rd Place – Paige Harper, St. Brigid of Kildare
- 4th Place – Grace Chapman, Columbus School for Girls
- 5th Place – Claire Bigelow, Willard Grizzell Middle School
- 6th Place – Thomas Talarek, Dr. Henry Karrer Middle School
- 7th Place – Sarah Franchitti, New Albany Middle School
- 8th Place – Kathleen Motter, St. Matthew School
- 9th Place – Sarah Ibel, Columbus School for Girls
- 10th Place – Natalie Ference, St. Matthew School
- 11th Place – Ava Manfresca, St. Matthew School
- 12th Place – Marley Barrett, Ann Simpson Davis Middle School

In addition, the following students earned Best of Round honors: 7th graders Madison Mershon and Lauren Bliss of Ann Simpson Davis Middle School and Erin Scott of KIPP Columbus, and 8th graders Sanskriti Gupta of Dr. Henry Karrer Middle School, Natalie Ference of St. Matthew School of Gahanna, and Finnley Casey of John Sells Middle School.

Power of the Pen, one of Ohio’s largest educational enhancement programs, seeks to positively impact academic achievement of the state’s middle schoolers by helping young people find and develop a creative voice uniquely their own.

All of the individual award winners, plus about the top 50% of writers at each grade level, will advance to the South-Central Regional Tournament virtually hosted by Ann Simpson Davis Middle School on March 5. They will be joined by those who advanced from District 1 in the January 8 tournament in Circleville. Qualifying students from the South-Central Regional Tournament will advance to a state tournament May 12-13 at Otterbein University.

The South-Central Region includes Delaware, Franklin, Knox, Licking, Madison, Marion, Morrow, Union, Athens, Fairfield, Gallia, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Pickaway, Pike, Ross, Scioto, and Vinton counties.

Power of the Pen is Ohio’s original interscholastic creative writing program for middle schools. 7th- and 8th-grade students in Ohio compete in a series of district, regional and state competitions by writing creative responses using provided prompts. The 501(c)(3) organization was founded in 1986 by the late Lorraine B. Merrill and has since become one of the state’s largest educational enhancement programs. About 3,000 students participate in tournaments each year, while in-class supporting materials are provided for nearly 300 middle schools in Ohio. Support for the 2021-2022 academic year has been provided by Ohio Humanities, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. For more information, visit powerofthepen.org.

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