

## Five Oregon students show off travel knowledge, advance in AAA scholarship contest

by Bend\_Weekly\_News\_Sources

Five Oregon high school students have advanced as state finalists in the 2007 AAA Travel High School Challenge. They will match travel wits and destination knowledge against each other in the state finals next month to win a trip to Orlando, FL, to compete for up to \$20,000 in scholarships in the national finals.

The Oregon finalists are: Conor C. Teal, grade 11, Pleasant Hill High School; Aidan T. Beers, grade 12, Beaverton High School; Samuel T. Brandt, grade 10, South Eugene High School; Dylan T. Pickford, grade 9, Silverton High School; Kerry T. Moynahan, grade 12, Dallas High School

“These students are at the head of the class with their knowledge of travel and tourism topics such as culture, transportation and geography,” said AAA Oregon Public Affairs Director Elliott Eki. “Their interest in the world around them will help them succeed as adults. We’re excited that one of them will represent Oregon in the national finals.”

The students advanced to the state finals by placing among the top five Oregon scorers on an online test in January. In early March, they will take a 40-question written, proctored exam, further testing their travel and destination knowledge. The highest scorer will be crowned state champion.

The state champion and a chaperone will receive an expense-paid trip to Universal Orlando to compete against winners from every state and Washington, D.C., in the national finals from May 19-22. The finals open with a written elimination exam, followed by an individual play-off competition. The first place winner will receive a \$20,000 scholarship; the second and third place finishers will receive \$10,000 and \$5,000 scholarships, respectively.

Surveys consistently show American students lag behind their global peers in their knowledge of geography and world events. The AAA Travel High School Challenge seeks to increase student interest in travel geography by focusing, in part, on one aspect that captures widespread interest: travel and tourist destinations.

Contest participants who express an interest in travel industry careers are also eligible for special scholarships that will pay for travel-related courses of study. As a leader in the travel industry, AAA depends on travel-savvy employees to serve its members and travel agency customers.

Sponsors of the contest, now in its fifth year, include Bank of America, Continental Airlines, Hard Rock Live, Marriott, Pleasant Holidays, and Universal Orlando.

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