

Tennessee Students Excel at National History Day

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Seven Tennessee students took top honors at the 2020 National History Day competition, winning three medals and two special awards. In total, 69 middle and high school students represented Tennessee in the competition, which allows students to showcase their creativity and research skills by developing projects with historical themes.

The theme of this year's contest was *Breaking Barriers in History*. Tennessee students, working in groups or individually, submitted 36 entries. These students earned the right to compete at National History Day by winning medals at the state contest, Tennessee History Day, which is organized by the Tennessee Historical Society and co-sponsored by the Tennessee Secretary of State's office and Humanities Tennessee.

The 2020 National History Day honorees from Tennessee are:

3rd Place Overall

[Alicia Dinwiddie](#)

Senior Individual Exhibit: *Mendez v. Westminster: The Trailblazer that Led the Way to School Desegregation*

Summit High School, Spring Hill

Teacher: Jackie Zigelsky

Irish or Irish-American History Award

[A.J. Camacho](#), [Campbell Koella](#) and [Hannah Rasmussen](#)

Senior Group Exhibit: *The Erie Canal: Breaking the Barrier to the West*

Clayton-Bradley Academy, Maryville

Teacher: Liz Shugart

Captain Ken Coskey Naval History Prize

[Jessie Henderson](#)

Senior Individual Documentary: "Unwelcomed Soldiers Invading a Fraternity": *Breaking Gender Barriers in the United States Military*

Bradley Central High School, Cleveland

Teacher: Julie Mitchell

Outstanding State Entry, Senior Division

[Tate Greene](#)

Senior Individual Documentary: *Appalachian Voices and Visions: 50 Years of Breaking Barriers Through Film*

Clayton-Bradley Academy, Maryville

Teacher: Liz Shugart

Outstanding State Entry, Junior Division
10th Place Overall

[Mackenzie Egan](#)

Junior Individual Performance: Fertility Breakthrough! IVF and The First Test Tube Baby
Gladeville Middle School, Mount Juliet
Teacher: Amy Wilken

“Congratulations to these outstanding students for representing Tennessee so well during these unprecedented times,” Secretary of State Tre Hargett said. “By taking home honors in this national competition, our students demonstrated expert knowledge in their chosen topics, and I have no doubt they will carry this experience with them for years to come.”

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, National History Day conducted a virtual competition this year. Students enjoyed a variety of activities, including an online scavenger hunt, writing development webinars, and virtual tours of Washington, D.C. museums.

“Our outstanding performance this year is a direct result of the many hours of hard work the students invested in their research,” said Tennessee History Day coordinator Jennifer C. Core. “The History Day competition cycle allows the students to revise their projects, based on feedback from the judges. Our students continued to work on their entries even after tornados and COVID-19 restrictions caused state-wide school closures, and their efforts were rewarded.”

[Rebecca Verner](#) of Meigs Academic Magnet Middle School, Nashville, Davidson County, was recognized as the 2020 Patricia Behring Tennessee Educator of the Year.

[Calvin Shaw](#) of Pleasant View School, Memphis, Shelby County, was recognized as the 2020 Hannah E. (Liz) MacGregor Tennessee Educator of the Year.

National History Day is a yearlong program which starts each fall with competitions held in individual schools. Winners advance to district, state and eventually the national competition. Nationwide, the History Day program includes more than a half million students annually from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa and Department of Defense Schools. The program engages 8,300 students across the state of Tennessee.

For more information about National History Day or Tennessee History Day, please visit tennesseehistory.org/tennessee-history-day.

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