

Seniors victorious in Black History Bowl

The annual Black History Bowl took place in the auditorium on Feb. 28 during Pride Time.

The event is organized in a trivia-based manner with the rules being fairly simple. The two teams that went head to head this year were comprised of five juniors going against four seniors.

Each participant has a signaling device and is allowed to buzz in once the question is read. The first contestant to buzz in gets to answer the question and if they answer correctly, their team is awarded one point. However, if they answer incorrectly, the question becomes available to the other team to answer.

The senior team, consisting of Jonathan Assefa, Ayman Elhag, Abbey Yared and Rohan Miah came away victorious as they defeated the junior team made up of Frances Montevilla, Karla Mercado, Ayia Ismael, Elizabeth Dula and Susan Connell.

“It was exciting to have the crowd chant for us and support us,” Assefa said. “I am proud of myself and my teammates for the performance we put on.”

The Black History Bowl opened with the speech by the event’s host, Technology teacher Phil Harris. There were a total of 12 questions asked with the range of categories including music, television, art, science, military, sports, politics, sports, movies and the civil rights movement.

“We spent a lot of time deciding on who would study which subjects from the study guide because it had a lot of information on it,” Miah said. “So it felt good to know that all that time we spent studying paid off even though some of

the categories weren't touched upon."

Questions asked included "Carl Burton Stokes was the first African American mayor of which major U.S. city?" with the answer being Cleveland, and "Which prize fighter won the middleweight title a total of five times?" with the answer being Sugar Ray Robinson.

Other questions required more complex answers such as playing 10 seconds of a song and having to respond with the name of the song and the artist.

"Our team felt really good on stage because we were confident," Miah said. "Also, I heard we were the first to beat Mr. [Joseph] Valentino's in six years so that was pretty cool."

Preview to Black History Bowl

"Which African-American founded the Tuskegee Institute?"

If you answered Booker T. Washington, then you are one of many students who should participate in the Black History Bowl.

Hosted by the BCAA, or Black Cultural Awareness Association, the Black History Bowl is an annual event created to celebrate Black History month while raising awareness of the importance and impact of African-Americans.

"The bowl creates an awareness of history and culture, and the importance of the bowl is to deal with some of those stereotypes that say that African Americans are just interested or able to do certain things and not others," BCAA sponsor Kathlyn Berry said.

"[They] show the broad pictures of not only contributions but experiences and how African Americans have contributed to American life and culture and society."

According to Berry, the goal of the bowl, as well as gaining student interest in the topic, is to teach African-American history in a fun way.

"There are people that don't know what we've done in other areas of academics," event organizer senior Marilyn Quist said.

"There are people that have done things in math and science (other than George Washington Carver). There is more to it and [we] want to let people know."

The Black History Bowl consists of four teams, one from each grade, and a teacher sponsor. Members of the BCAA work together to create questions, as well as a study packet for the event.

"Since we are the sponsors of the bowl we basically plan everything out for the bowl ranging from the sponsors for each class, to categories and what questions, what kind of questions can be asked," Quist said.

"Right now we are still in the process of doing that. There is also the contestants, and them getting packets to learn from."

During the bowl, various questions are asked to the teams, and whoever rings the buzzer first and answers correctly gains points for their team.

The Black History Bowl will take place in the auditorium on Feb. 20 during extended W4.

Black History Bowl tomorrow in flexes

With posters of famous African Americans lining the hallway, [Black History Month](#) has officially kicked off at AHS. The posters, created by students in the Social Studies Honor Society, are among the many traditions that are occurring during the month of February. Students in each class are also preparing to compete in the annual Black History Bowl.

The Black History Bowl is sponsored by the Black Culture Awareness Association (BCAA) and the history department. Each grade will be represented by three students in the competition and the winning team receives \$100 for their class treasury and \$20-\$25 for each team member. The event will be held during an extended W6 flex on Feb. 18 and teachers can sign their classes up to attend. The questions will range from historical events, music, famous athletes, politicians and other people who changed the course of history.

“The black culture is often not seen throughout daily life and it is a great culture that can be seen through many people,” senior and president of the BCAA Zeni Saife-Selassie said. “It is very vibrant and that is what started AHS on the road to diversity.”

The BCAA, which meets every Monday at 2:15 in room 287, has also contributed the Black History Month acts of the day to the afternoon announcements.

The turnout for participants for the bowl has been large this year. History teacher Joel Jepson, who is coaching the junior team, had eight students express interest and had to hold tryouts to limit the team down to three students. Out of the eight students who tried out, four are members of the Social Studies Honor Society. The junior team has been practicing

with the It's Academic buzzers to prepare for Friday. "I competed last year and I liked the competition and there's a \$100 prize," junior Andy Tran said, who was trying out for Jepson's team.

Each class coach has been holding practices with their students in preparation for the bowl. Though each sponsor would like their team to win, they are all keeping the good humored spirit of the competition intact. "I gave them packets on topics that we be covered. They are divided up so that each person can be more of an expert," history teacher Gregory Commons said. "I've been doing this for three or four years."

In addition to Jepson and Commons, history teacher Meghan Saladino is the coach of the sophomore team and health teacher Peggy Capehart is the coach of the freshman team.

According to the Library of Congress, the theme of National Black History Month is "African Americans and the Civil War." The theme is especially topical because last year was the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War. The focus of this theme is how African Americans worked to earn freedom and equal civil rights. The month-long event is sponsored by the Library of Congress, National Endowment for the Humanities, Smithsonian Institution, National Gallery of Art, National Archives and Records Administration, National Park Service and United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The event began as [Negro History Week](#) in 1926 during a week in February that encompassed both President Abraham Lincoln and abolitionist [Frederick Douglass](#)' birthday. In 1976, it was expanded to a month-long event, during the United States' bicentennial and 50 years after the first Negro History Week.

As the participants of the bowl cram knowledge into their heads, many students are eagerly awaiting the competition. The winning award is something that each class could use in their treasury and the bragging rights are an excellent added bonus.

For the BCAA and the history department, the bowl represents an attempt to educate the students about important people who made a difference in history. “[I hope that] people become more knowledgeable and tolerant about other cultures,” Saife-Selassie said.