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For Immediate Release

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LOCAL SPELLING BEE WINNERS ANNOUNCED
Top speller to compete in national competition in Washington, D.C.

(New Orleans, LA) -- The New Orleans (LA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated announces the winners of its 34th Annual Spelling Bee competition that took place at Dillard University on Saturday, March 18, 2023.

First Place Winner: Nayara de Silva-Ahmed, 7th grade, Metairie Park Country Day (Speller #106)

Second Place Winner: Clark Canizaro, 6th grade, Stuart Hall School for Boys (Speller #280)

Third Place Winner: Ezra Miley, 6th grade, Metairie Park Country Day (Speller #29)

Nayara de Siva-Ahmed will receive an all-expense-paid trip to compete in the 2023 Scripps National Spelling Bee that will be held in National Harbor, Maryland during the week of Memorial Day. She also received a trophy, Webster Dictionary, a lifetime subscription to Rosetta Stone and Scholastic Book Dollars. The second and third place winners received a trophy, a Webster Dictionary and Scholastic Book Dollars.

Judges for the bee included Louisiana State Representative Matthew Willard, Judge Kern Reese, retired Judge Arthur Hunter, Will Sutton, Kim Glass, Terrance Dugas, Toyin Idewu, Bambi Hall, Alice Grooms, and Lynette Brice. Callers included Norman Robinson, Gina Swanson, Kathy Saloy, Christopher Vincent, and Alma Nicholson.. Several chapter members served as room monitors.

In 2021, the first place winner of the local spelling bee, **Zaila Avant-garde, won the 32nd Annual Scripps National Spelling Bee.** Zaila, Speller #133, was an 8th grader at Clover Lane Home School. Zaila participated in the national bee on Thursday, July 8, 2021, alongside ten other contestants. Zaila correctly spelled "Murraya", a type of tree, to win the competition. The final round was hosted in person at the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex at the Walt Disney World Resort and aired on ESPN and spellingbee.com. **Zaila was the first African-American and first Louisianian to win the national bee.** She was the first homeschooler to win since 2000.

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Winners of local spelling bee ... add one

About the New Orleans Chapter of The Links, Incorporated

Since it was chartered on November 20, 1957, members of The New Orleans (LA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated have engaged in implementing program services through the five National Program Facets: Services to Youth, International Trends and Services, National Trends and Services, Health and Human Services and The Arts. The Chapter's major initiatives include sponsoring the local competition for the Scripps National Spelling Bee; a partnership with Mary McCloud Bethune Elementary School; Obesity Awareness Day; and Law Day, in which Bethune Elementary School students are trained in legal proceedings and participate in a mock trial. The main focus areas are: financial support for college students, education and youth activities to assist youth in fulfilling their intellectual potential; addressing issues affecting the African American community through health and wellness projects; fostering cultural appreciation through the arts; and collaborating with other Link chapters to provide services and assistance to global friends. Tracey Flemings-Davillier is the President of the Chapter. For more information, visit www.neworleanslinks.org and follow the Chapter on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @NewOrleansLinks.

About The Southern Area of The Links, Incorporated

The Southern Area of The Links, Incorporated is comprised of 82 chapters located in seven states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, and South Carolina) and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas. For more information, visit www.salinksinc.org.

About The Links, Incorporated

The Links, Incorporated is an international, not-for-profit corporation, established in 1946. The membership consists of nearly 16,000 professional women of African decent in 292 chapters located in 41 states, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of the Bahamas and the United Kingdom. It is one of the nation's oldest and largest volunteer service organizations of extraordinary women who are committed to enriching, sustaining and ensuring the culture and economic survival of African Americans and other persons of African ancestry. The outstanding programming of The Links, Incorporated has five facets which include **Services to Youth, International Trends and Services, National Trends and Services, Health and Human Services, and The Arts**. For more information, visit www.linksinc.org.

About the Scripps National Spelling Bee

The Scripps National Spelling Bee is the nation's largest and longest-running educational program, having launched in 1925. The purpose of the Scripps National Spelling Bee is to help students improve their spelling, increase their vocabularies, learn concepts and develop correct English usage that will help them all their lives. Visit www.spellingbee.com for more information about the Scripps National Spelling Bee, which is administered on a not-for-profit basis by The E.W. Scripps Company.

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Winners of local spelling bee ... add two



Left to right: Ezra Miley - Third Place Winner; Nayara de Silva-Ahmed - First Place Winner; Clark Canizaro - Second Place Winner. Credit: The New Orleans (LA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated



Nayara de Silva-Ahmed - First Place Winner. Credit: The New Orleans (LA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated

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Winners of local spelling bee ... add three



Clark Canizaro - Second Place Winner. Credit: The New Orleans (LA) Chapter of The Links, Incorporated



Ezra Miley - Third Place Winner. **Credit: Romaguera Photography**

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