Speller No. 3, Rory O'Donoghue  
*Daily News-Miner*, Fairbanks, Alaska  
Age 21, 8th grade  
School: Randy Smith Middle School  
Hometown: Fairbanks, Alaska  

Rory is an avid reader and especially likes books by Dan Brown; his favorite is Angels and Demons. In the winter Rory competes on a cross-country skiing team. During the rest of the year he runs on his school's cross-country team. Music is a big part of Rory's life. He plays saxophone in the school jazz band, plays clarinet in the Fairbanks Youth Orchestras program, and plays bass clarinet in the Randy Smith Concert Band. Rory has won awards at the Alaska State Fair for speech and junior creative writing. Also, he has won numerous awards for art and dog mushing.

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Speller No. 5, Anjali Nair  
Arizona Educational Foundation, Scottsdale, Arizona  
Age 20, 8th grade  
School: McKemy Middle School  
Hometown: Tempe, Arizona  

Anjali is a voracious reader whose favorite book is Gone with the Wind by Margaret Mitchell. She is on her school's Mathcounts team, is vice president of her school's student council, and is vice president of her school's National Junior Honor Society. Anjali is also on the Mayor's Youth Advisory Commission. She enjoys swimming and playing chess, and likes to travel. Anjali also likes writing and music. She is a straight-A student who also speaks Hindi, and understands the Tamil and Malayalam languages. Anjali aspires to become a doctor.

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Speller No. 7, Esther Park  
*Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, Little Rock, Arkansas  
Age 21, 8th grade  
School: Joe T. Robinson Middle School  
Hometown: Little Rock, Arkansas  

Esther enjoys swimming at the local YMCA, watching television and hanging out at home. She likes to draw in her spare time, and also enjoys Christian and alternative music. Esther's best school subject is history, and she would like to pursue a career in medicine. If you were to spend time in Esther's home, you would notice that she and her parents also speak Korean. After reading Hillary Clinton's biography, Esther regards her as a role model for many women and would love to meet her. Esther tied for 17th place in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.
Speller No. 11, Brandon Whitehead  
*Imperial Valley Press*, El Centro, California  
Age 21, 8th grade  
School: Home School  
Hometown: El Centro, California

Brandon likes working on computers and aspires to become an open-source software developer someday. He is currently a Boy Scout and loves camping. Brandon's favorite exercise is walking, which he enjoys doing with his favorite yellow Labrador, Molecule. Brandon studies daily to prepare for spelling bees and his favorite book is Webster's Third New International Dictionary. Brandon tied for 60th place in the 2007 Scripps National Spelling Bee and tied for 37th place in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 12, Jeremiah Cortez  
Los Angeles Spelling Bee Collaborative, Los Angeles, California  
Age 21, 8th grade  
School: Eleanor J. Toll Middle School  
Hometown: Glendale, California

Jerry loves to read books, especially those of the science fiction genre. His favorite author is Harry Turtledove. In his spare time Jerry practices fencing and he also enjoys playing video games. He excels in algebra, and is the school winner for the California Math League contest. Jerry hopes to put that knowledge of mathematics to good use with a possible career in business and finance. Jerry's role model is his father whom Jerry says always takes responsibility for his actions, knows the answers to many questions, goes to extremes to protect Jerry, and is always determined to achieve his goals.

Speller No. 16, Anvita Mishra  
*The Sacramento Bee*, Sacramento, California  
Age 20, 8th grade  
School: Olympus Junior High School  
Hometown: Lincoln, California

Anvita loves math, science and reading. She plays the piano and guitar in her spare time. Also, she enjoys swimming, playing tennis, hiking and baby-sitting. If you spend time in Anvita's home, you will notice that Anvita and her family are fluent in Hindi. Anvita's role model is her mother because she works hard for the family. Anvita would like to meet Barack Obama. She aspires to be a neurologist.
Speller No. 19, Sarah Gadre
San Francisco Chronicle, San Francisco, California
Age 21, 8th grade
School: Castilleja School
Hometown: Los Altos, California

Sarah enjoys hanging out with friends, reading, watching movies and listening to music. Her favorite music genres are alternative, rock and pop. Her favorite bands are Fall Out Boy, Paramore and Cobra Starship. Sarah loves comic strips, especially Zits and FoxTrot. She has participated in many school activities including softball, robotics, musicals, and she was part of the technical crew for a school arts production. Sarah wants to visit Ireland and Japan, and she would like to learn how to surf and skateboard. She admires suffragists like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton for their determination to fight for women's rights.

Speller No. 24, Laura Newcombe
CanWest CanSpell National Spelling Bee, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
Age 18, 7th grade
School: Deer Park Public School
Hometown: Toronto, Ontario, Canada, Canada

Laura enjoys swimming and ballet. A music enthusiast, she loves to create her own music or to listen to the musical performances of others. Laura is an avid reader whose favorite book is The Host by Stephenie Meyer. She likes to write poems and stories, and aspires to be a writer. Laura also enjoys drawing manga. She appreciates the great outdoors—especially the trees, flowers and water. Laura tied for 17th place in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee. Her sister, Leslie, participated in the 2006 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 26, David Phan
Daily Camera, Boulder, Colorado
Age 20, 7th grade
School: Nevin Platt Middle School
Hometown: Longmont, Colorado

David likes reading, watching television and playing video games. He has played trombone as a member of the school band for three years, and hopes to continue with his music through high school. David also enjoys playing badminton with his father, whom he credits as his role model because he proves that with enough determination and perseverance, almost anything is possible. David's best school subject is mathematics, and he plans to become a neurosurgeon or an aerospace engineer. David participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.
Speller No. 27, Brian King  
_The Denver Post, Denver, Colorado_  
Age 20, 8th grade  
School: Colorado Connections Academy  
Hometown: Colorado Springs, Colorado

Brian has been a Boy Scout for four years and is his troop's patrol leader. While in Cub Scouts he earned nearly every belt loop and pin available, including the Arrow of Light award. In Boy Scouts Brian earned the rank of Star Scout in just 18 months. He hiked nearly 100 miles last summer, including a 20-mile hike to finish a Boy Scout merit badge. Brian plays on three baseball and basketball teams and one football team. Brian is an enthusiastic reader and enjoys creating crossword puzzles.

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Speller No. 28, Rahul Malayappan  
_Connecticut Post, Bridgeport, Connecticut_  
Age 17, 6th grade  
School: Broadview Middle School  
Hometown: Danbury, Connecticut

Rahul is a violinist who began playing at age three using the Suzuki method. He loves to play video games on his PSP, Nintendo DS, Nintendo Wii and laptop. Rahul is learning computer programming from his mother, and hopes to one day program a video game. His favorite sport is baseball, but he also enjoys chess. Rahul started learning chess when he was two years old, and helps his mother run a chess club at his sister's elementary school. Rahul likes to read, and his favorite author is Roald Dahl. He also enjoys drawing, writing and photography. This is Rahul's third appearance at the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

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Speller No. 36, Grace Remmer  
_The Florida Times-Union, Jacksonville, Florida_  
Age 18, 5th grade  
School: Home School  
Hometown: St. Augustine, Florida

Grace delights in playing violin, knitting, and reading. Her favorite author is Jules Verne and she loves the book, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea. She has been a member of the local youth orchestra for three years, and held a position as its concertmaster in 2009. Her favorite music comes from the fiddle, and she would like to meet composer George Frideric Handel. Grace's best school subject is science, and she aspires to become either a professional violinist or a veterinarian. Her favorite animal is her grandfather's black Labrador, Lu Lu.
Speller No. 38, Vaidya Govindarajan
*The Miami Herald*, Miami, Florida
Age 19, 6th grade
School: Herbert A. Ammons Middle School
Hometown: Miami, Florida

Vaidya is a member of National Junior Honor Society. He is an accomplished piano and guitar player. Reading is one of Vaidya's favorite hobbies, and his favorite books are from the Percy Jackson & The Olympians series. Vaidya's favorite television show is SpongeBob SquarePants, and he also enjoys playing video games and swimming. Vaidya is fluent in Tamil. His best school subject is science, and he would like to pursue a career in medicine.

Speller No. 44, Aldrin D'Silva
Treasure Coast Newspapers, Stuart, Florida
Age 21, 8th grade
School: Northport K-8 School
Hometown: Port St. Lucie, Florida

Aldrin is an avid reader who recently finished the Left Behind series by Jerry B. Jenkins and Tim LaHaye. He is very interested in aerospace--especially sleek fighter jets--and he delights in supercars, science and technology. Aldrin volunteers at his church by helping to operate the sound system, and he is also a reading mentor for second grade students. Recently Aldrin was involved in raising funds for Haiti relief. In his spare time he can be found reading his Bible, listening to music and playing his PSP. Aldrin aspires to become a physician. He participated in the 2007 and 2008 Scripps National Spelling Bees.

Speller No. 48, Julia Denniss
Georgia Association of Educators, Tucker, Georgia
Age 20, 7th grade
School: Marist School
Hometown: Dunwoody, Georgia

Julia plays flute, piano and electric guitar. This fall she will join the marching band. Julia holds an advanced brown belt in karate, and is currently working toward her black belt. She also loves acting and has been in several plays, including Treasure Island and her school's Christmas production. Julia enjoys writing short stories in her spare time, and she writes for the seventh and eighth grade newspaper. She is also a certified scuba diver. Julia participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.
Speller No. 55, Adrian Gunawan  
Commonwealth Edison, Chicago, Illinois  
Age 21, 8th grade  
School: South Middle School  
Hometown: Arlington Heights, Illinois

Adrian likes chemistry, and puts that strong interest to good use as a two-year member of his school's Science Olympiad team. He is driven to become either an engineer or a surgeon and, to support those goals, he uses his spare time to study his favorite subject, mathematics. Adrian is not all about science and math, though—he likes classical music and The Beatles. Adrian participated in the 2008 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 57, Michaela Minock  
Commonwealth Edison, Chicago, Illinois  
Age 20, 8th grade  
School: Peotone Junior High School  
Hometown: Peotone, Illinois

Michaela's true passion and favorite activity is dance. She takes five classes a week in ballet, pointe, jazz, lyrical and tap. She is also a member of her dance studio's competition team. Michaela loves to read, but has a difficult time choosing a favorite book because there are so many that she likes. She hopes to be a children's author someday. At school, Michaela participates in spelling club, math club and speech club. She also takes a Spanish class before school begins. Michaela participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 61, Gina Liu  
_Herald & Review_, Decatur, Illinois  
Age 20, 8th grade  
School: Charleston Middle School  
Hometown: Charleston, Illinois

Gina enjoys reading, writing, music and debate. She is varsity captain on her school's scholastic bowl team and she creates stop-motion animations in her spare time. Besides playing piano, Gina is a violinist in the Eastern Illinois University Symphonic Orchestra, and she plays oboe in her school band. She aspires to become a lawyer, filmmaker or author—perhaps publishing her own novel and emulating the success of her favorite writers, J.R.R. Tolkien, Terry Pratchett and Douglas Adams. Gina participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.
Speller No. 80, Modhura Chakravarty
*Journal and Courier*, Lafayette, Indiana
Age 20, 8th grade
School: West Lafayette Junior/Senior High School
Hometown: West Lafayette, Indiana

Modhura loves to read and write. Her favorite book is Splendor by Anna Godbersen. She has played flute and piccolo in her school's band for the past four years. Modhura also enjoys singing, and has participated in Indiana Music Educators Association's Circle the State with Song for two years. Modhura is on the school's girls' basketball and volleyball teams. She has participated in Mathcounts, advancing to the state level this year. Modhura connects well with children and hopes to become a pediatrician one day.

Speller No. 88, Owayne Rodney
*Jamaica Gleaner*, Kingston, Jamaica
Age 18, 6th grade
School: St. Thomas More Preparatory School
Hometown: Clarendon, Jamaica, Jamaica

Owayne is an avid reader. He believes that following instructions is one of his keys to success, and one of his secrets to being an excellent speller is that he is a visual learner. A self-described sports fan, Owayne plays cricket and soccer, and he represents his school in the Prep Schools cricket competition. He is also a Boy Scout. He is actively involved in his church, and he enjoys contemporary gospel music.

Speller No. 89, Sonia Schlesinger
*The Japan Times*, Tokyo, Japan
Age 21, 8th grade
School: Nishimachi International School
Hometown: Tokyo, Japan, Japan

Sonia is active in sports and music. She was a member of her school's track and cross-country teams. Also, she enjoys baseball and is a Boston Red Sox fan. Sonia is a member of her school's chorus and she plays the piano. She loves drama and has been in several school plays including the Music Man and the Wizard of Oz. Sonia enjoys languages and is fluent in Spanish. She is also studying French and Japanese. Sonia participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee, and was then living just a 15-minute Metro ride away from the competition venue. This year she will fly 14 hours to compete in Washington, D.C.
Speller No. 93, Emily Keaton
Kentucky Spelling Bee Collaborative, Louisville, Kentucky
Age 18, 5th grade
School: Christ Central Training School and Academy
Hometown: Pikeville, Kentucky

Emily loves to read, write and sing. She plays piano and basketball and serves as captain of her school's academic team. Emily enjoys spending time with her friends, her cat Magic, and her dogs Daisy and Rosie. She plans on becoming a singer/songwriter and reaching her own generation of youth with the love of Jesus. On Emily's list of people she would most like to meet are the President of the United States, her favorite musician Carrie Underwood, and Frank Neuhauser, winner of the first National Spelling Bee who is also from Kentucky. Emily participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 102, Lanson Tang
The Meakem Group of Wells Fargo Advisors, Bethesda, Maryland
Age 21, 8th grade
School: Home School
Hometown: Potomac, Maryland

Lanson loves sports. He is a dedicated swimmer, and is especially good at swimming breaststroke. He also enjoys basketball, soccer, volleyball and running. Lanson likes reading, and read hundreds of books while in elementary school. His favorite subject is mathematics, and he aspires to be either a statistician or a game designer. Lanson also likes learning foreign languages, and can speak Chinese, some French and some Spanish. He enjoys theater and dance, and he plays piano and violin.

Speller No. 110, Shivani Angappan
Sentinel & Enterprise, Fitchburg, Massachusetts
Age 17, 4th grade
School: Home School
Hometown: Bedford, Massachusetts

Shivani enjoys ancient literature, linguistics and mathematics. She also likes to write creatively and to listen to classical music. For fun, Shivani loves to spend time reading in her cozy home library. She can also be found day dreaming, playing with numbers or playing with her black lab, Nano. Shivani is a vegetarian and a connoisseur of ethnic foods, especially Greek and Italian cuisine. Her favorite pastimes include swimming and karate. Shivani also plays violin.
Speller No. 129, Anja Beth Swoap  
Lockridge Grindal Nauen P.L.L.P., Minneapolis, Minnesota  
Age 20, 7th grade  
School: Valley View Middle School  
Hometown: Edina, Minnesota

Anja Beth likes to design clothes, and sews many of them in doll sizes. She has also crocheted many scarves. Anja Beth enjoys baking, especially around Christmas. She plays the flute in her school band, and she is teaching herself to play guitar. For three years Anja Beth has taken dance classes in tap, jazz and ballet. She plays soccer in the summer, and she likes taking her dog, Patches, for walks. Anja Beth is a member of her school's Mathcounts team, and she enjoys teaching her Sunday school small group every week. After spending six years in a French language immersion school, Anja Beth speaks fluent French. She participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 133, Elizabeth Platz  
Columbia Daily Tribune, Columbia, Missouri  
Age 20, 8th grade  
School: Home School  
Hometown: Shelbina, Missouri

Elizabeth enjoys reading, creative writing and poetry. She has written her first fictional book based on a group of friends who discover and help save a secret world, and she is planning to write several sequels. Elizabeth's favorite book is Webster's Third New International Dictionary. She also enjoys drawing, painting and music. Elizabeth aspires to have a career in fine arts, utilizing her writing and drawing skills. She and her brother have an extensive Beanie Babies collection. She participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 142, Emma Johanningsmeier  
Omaha World-Herald, Omaha, Nebraska  
Age 21, 8th grade  
School: Westside Middle School  
Hometown: Omaha, Nebraska

Emma enjoys reading, spelling and learning new things. Her favorite books are from the Harry Potter series because of the fantastic world that goes along with the stories. Another book Emma likes is We the Living by Ayn Rand. Emma enjoys playing classical piano and she also plays the keyboard in her school's jazz band. She likes learning languages, and speaks German and French. During Emma's fifth grade year she lived with her family in Leipzig, Germany, and attended a German elementary school. Emma also traveled to England, France, Italy and Denmark. She participates in Mathcounts, the National Geographic Bee competition and the National French Contest.
Speller No. 143, Dakota Jones  
*Las Vegas Review-Journal*, Las Vegas, Nevada  
Age 20, 7th grade  
School: Hyde Park Middle School  
Hometown: Las Vegas, Nevada

Dakota currently attends a magnet school that specializes in mathematics and science. He is a member of his school's orchestra and plays the viola and piano. Dakota is also involved in Mathcounts competitions. One of his favorite classes in school is history, in which he enjoys learning the story of our country. Dakota is a Boy Scout and has earned the Life Scout rank in addition to many merit badges. He aspires to earn the Eagle Scout rank in the future. Dakota's other interests include anything related to food or astronomy.

Speller No. 144, Anjithaa Radakrishnan  
*New Hampshire Union Leader*, Manchester, New Hampshire  
Age 20, 8th grade  
School: Nashua Catholic Regional Junior High School  
Hometown: Nashua, New Hampshire

Anjithaa enjoys reading, writing and biking. She has been studying Indian classical dance for seven years, and has studied Indian vocal music for six years. Anjithaa has participated in Destination ImagiNation for three years. She is a member of her school's basketball and writer's club teams. Also, she was captain of a Mathcounts team that qualified for the state finals. Anjithaa aspires to become a pediatric cardiologist. Anjithaa tied for 34th place in the 2007 Scripps National Spelling Bee. Her brother, Avvinash, competed in the Scripps National Spelling Bee in 2006, 2008 and 2009, tying for 12th place in 2009.

Speller No. 151, Hannah Evans  
*The Albuquerque Journal*, Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Age 21, 8th grade  
School: Home School  
Hometown: Albuquerque, New Mexico

Hannah's interests include cooking, reading and gardening. At the New Mexico State Fair she won second place for a gigantic pumpkin that she grew. In her free time, Hannah enjoys playing tennis and basketball. She also likes sketching fashion designs, and aspires to have her own clothing company. Hannah enjoys helping others, and she volunteers at a local food bank. She also assists her parents with their arts and crafts business, and she has created and sold her own jewelry at several shows. Spelling is a family affair: Hannah participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee; her brother, Matthew, participated in five consecutive Scripps National Spelling Bees between 2004 and 2008.
Speller No. 155, Neetu Chandak
_Finger Lakes Times_, Geneva, New York
Age 21, 8th grade
School: Seneca Falls Middle School
Hometown: Seneca Falls, New York

Neetu's favorite subject in school is art, and she would like to become an architect and interior designer. She plays the clarinet and piano, and has twice been named to an all-county honor band. She also takes tap and jazz dance classes. Neetu's favorite sports are badminton, volleyball, softball and tennis. Her hobbies include collecting stamps, coins and rocks. Neetu loves playing with her puppy, Bella. She participated in the 2007, 2008, and 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bees, tying for 8th place in 2009.

Speller No. 160, Arvind Mahankali
_Daily News_, New York, New York
Age 17, 5th grade
School: Forest Hills Montessori School
Hometown: Forest Hills, New York

Arvind is a 2009 university talent search participant. He loves playing tennis and soccer. He also enjoys reading books, playing video games and spending time with his younger brother. Arvind speaks Telugu and is learning Indian classical music. His favorite food is pizza and his favorite book is Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince by J.K. Rowling. He would like to pursue a career in law. Arvind's cousin, Sanjay Kottapali, participated in the 2008 and 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bees.

Speller No. 168, Tom Winter
_The New Zealand Listener_, Wellington, New Zealand
Age 20, 8th grade
School: Burnside High School
Hometown: Christchurch, Canterbury, New Zealand, New Zealand

Tom has played violin since he was five years old, and he has been playing saxophone for three years. He likes music, reading, tennis and video games. Tom's favorite sport is football. His favorite athletes are Drew Brees of the New Orleans Saints and tennis player Roger Federer. Tom's pets include Frankie the cat, and guinea pigs Ivy and Meringue. He enjoys jazz music, and at school he is interested in science and English. He would love to become a doctor someday.
**Speller No. 180, Shantanu Srivatsa**  
North Dakota Council of Educational Leaders, Bismarck, North Dakota  
Age 20, 8th grade  
School: Cheney Middle School  
Hometown: West Fargo, North Dakota  

Shantanu's raison d'être is to excel in everything he tries. However, he learned early on that, while winning is enjoyable, participation is even more satisfying. This is Shantanu's third consecutive appearance at the Bee, and his second time representing the state of North Dakota. His favorite subject is math, and has represented his school at regional and state mathematics competitions. Shantanu has played piano for six years. Some of his hobbies include collecting ancient coins to add to his coin collection, swimming and playing tennis.

**Speller No. 185, Anamika Veeramani**  
*The Plain Dealer*, Cleveland, Ohio  
Age 21, 8th grade  
School: Incarnate Word Academy  
Hometown: North Royalton, Ohio  

Anamika's passions include reading, writing, photography and painting. She takes private lessons in Indian classical dance and golf. Anamika has been studying Indian classical music for eight years, and has played the violin for six years. She is a member of her school's orchestra, and she also enjoys swimming. Anamika is very interested in science and she has participated in science fairs at which her research projects have earned several awards. She aspires to become a cardiovascular surgeon, an author and a screenwriter. Anamika tied for fifth place in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

**Speller No. 188, Nicholas Rushlow**  
*Lancaster Eagle-Gazette*, Lancaster, Ohio  
Age 19, 6th grade  
School: Harmon Middle School  
Hometown: Pickerington, Ohio  

Nicholas is an avid reader, accomplished violinist and sports enthusiast. He is in his sixth year with Suzuki Music Columbus and is a member of the Vivaldi Ensemble. Also, he enjoys jazz improvisation and fiddling. Nicholas is a competitive year-round swimmer with the New Albany Aquatics Club and the Chevington Woods Kingfish. His favorite events are the 50-meter backstroke and 500-meter freestyle. In his spare time, Nicholas enjoys biking, tennis, bowling and Legos. His favorite vacation destination is San Diego. At school Nicholas's favorite subject is science, and last year he finished first in the Continental Math League competition at his middle school. Nicholas wants to someday work in medicine or biomedical research. He participated in the 2008 and 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bees, tying for 17th place in 2009.
Speller No. 190, George Jose
The Lima News, Lima, Ohio
Age 21, 8th grade
School: Wapakoneta High School
Hometown: Wapakoneta, Ohio

George plays piano and is a member of the percussion section of his school's band. He is also a member of Junior Optimist Octagon International and enjoys playing golf. George's other interests include traveling, running, collecting cool shoes, listening to music, reading, playing video games and trying exotic foods. George is an altar server and choir member at his church. He also volunteers at Loaves & Fishes Family Kitchen. George participated in the 2007 and 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bees, and his brother, Joseph, participated in the 2005 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 202, Connor Aberl?
Portland Tribune, Portland, Oregon
Age 21, 8th grade
School: Home School
Hometown: Portland, Oregon

Connor was born in the Bahamas, and is proud to have dual citizenship. He has played the violin for six years, and his favorite pastime is composing orchestral music. Connor won a scholarship to the Aspen Music Festival and School in 2005. In addition to music, he enjoys acting and performing improvisational comedy. This year Connor played the lead role in his school's production of Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. He spends a lot of time writing fiction and working on various aspects of video game design. Connor loves to see the world, and has traveled extensively in Europe and the Americas. He is an accomplished snow skier and holds a green belt in Tae Kwon Do. Connor tied for 17th place in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 205, Joanna Ye
WITF: Public Media for Central Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Age 20, 7th grade
School: Lamberton Middle School
Hometown: Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Joanna plays the flute in her school's concert band, plays alto saxophone in jazz band and she plays tenor saxophone in the marching band. Her favorite kind of music is alternative rock, but her favorite musician is Ludwig Van Beethoven. Joanna likes to play tennis and her first tournament was last December. She has received various math awards and she has participated in local science fairs. Joanna likes to read and write, and she placed first for fiction in The Hershey Story history contest. She also enjoys art, and won the Pennsylvania Art Education Association logo design contest.
Speller No. 207, Neel Mehta
The Times Herald, Norristown, Pennsylvania
Age 21, 8th grade
School: Arcola Intermediate School
Hometown: Audubon, Pennsylvania

Neel has taken first place in the Pennsylvania Mathematics League for two years, and has been a member of his school's Mathcounts team for three years. This year he captained his school team at the county level competition and qualified for the state level. Last year, Neel placed first in the nation at the National Language Arts League competition. He is a prize-winning participant in science fairs and aspires to be a scientist. Neel is a member of his school's track and-field team and plays violin in his school's select orchestra ensemble. He is a member of the National Junior Honor Society. Neel enjoys playing video games with his sister, blogging about the environment and volunteering at his local library. Neel participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 213, Sukanya Roy
Times Leader, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania
Age 20, 7th grade
School: Abington Heights Middle School
Hometown: South Abington Twp, Pennsylvania

Sukanya plays the violin and the piano. Her favorite sports are badminton and rock climbing. In her spare time Sukanya may be found reading and writing. Her favorite book is The Book Thief by Markus Zusak. Sukanya also enjoys riding her bike and exploring the woods in her backyard. She dreams of traveling the world some day, and pursuing a career in international relations. Sukanya tied for 12th place in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 214, Julianna Canabal-Rodríguez
Commonwealth-Parkville School, San Juan, Puerto Rico
Age 20, 7th grade
School: Southwestern Educational Society
Hometown: Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, Puerto Rico

Julianna enjoys reading suspense, romance and mystery books. She likes a variety of music ranging from jazz to rock, and finds it very difficult to study words or do homework without hearing music because it helps her concentrate. Julianna also enjoys riding her bike, going to movies with friends and playing with her siblings. She likes going to the beach and fishing whenever possible. Julianna is fascinated by new languages. Her first language is Spanish and she has been taking French for two years. In her spare time, Julianna likes to write scripts, and refers to her creative writing as "Juliannesque style"--as if it were an eponym. She participated in the 2008 and 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bees.
Speller No. 222, Sean Calhoun  
*Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan*, Yankton, South Dakota  
Age 21, 8th grade  
School: Patrick Henry Middle School  
Hometown: Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Sean is an avid sports fan and a voracious reader. He earned his second degree black belt in Taekwondo last year. Sean's favorite school subject is math, and in both 2009 and 2010 he traveled to Orlando, Florida, to compete in the national Mathcounts competition as a member of the South Dakota team. He hopes to become a statistician someday. Sean's other interests include video games, chess and writing. He participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 237, Aditya Chemudupaty  
*HoustonPBS*, Houston, Texas  
Age 20, 8th grade  
School: Nolan Ryan Junior High School  
Hometown: Pearland, Texas

Aditya credits his "reading habit" for his excellent spelling skills; this is his second appearance at the national bee. His idea of a pleasant afternoon might include watching the movie Avatar, or reading his favorite novel, *The Lost Symbol* by Dan Brown. Aditya's favorite sport is football and he really likes Tony Romo of the Dallas Cowboys. A flutist in his school's wind ensemble, Aditya is also learning Indian classical music and studying violin. His life ambition is to either play flute professionally or become a marine biologist. Aditya tied for 12th place in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 252, Sarah Allen  
*The News-Virginian and The Daily Progress*, Charlottesville, Virginia  
Age 19, 7th grade  
School: Home School  
Hometown: Waynesboro, Virginia

Sarah Anne is an avid reader, with a particular interest in the fantasy genre. Her favorite book is *Gregor the Overlander* by Suzanne Collins. Sarah Anne also enjoys writing stories and poetry, and has a natural gift for languages. She is interested in animals, and is a member of the Nature Nuts 4-H Club. Sarah Anne brings ideas to life with anything from scraps of fabric to sticks from her backyard. She is an active participant in her church youth group, and aspires to be a missionary someday.
Speller No. 259, Tim Ruiter
*Fairfax County Times*, Reston, Virginia
Age 20, 8th grade
School: Home School
Hometown: Centreville, Virginia

Tim enjoys building with Legos and is a fan of science fiction. He likes riding his bike, running and reading. Tim has been playing electric and acoustic guitar for the last three years. He has been on the Science Bowl team for the last two years, placing third in the regional competition in 2010, and in the top twelve nationally in 2009. Tim is a member of his church's junior high youth group, and is a junior counselor in the grade school boys youth group. He loves jelly beans, dark chocolate, quesadillas, chicken pizza and ice cream. Tim tied for second place in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Speller No. 272, Karen Laska
*The Catholic Spirit*, Wheeling, West Virginia
Age 20, 8th grade
School: St. Vincent de Paul Parish School
Hometown: Triadelphia, West Virginia

Karen enjoys reading, hanging out with friends and listening to music. She has been studying piano for seven years, and is a member of her school and church choirs. Karen is on her school's forensics team, and she participates in public speaking, poetry recitation and dramatic reading competitions. She also likes to travel, and visits relatives in Ireland and Poland often. Her parents are her role models because of their initiative to come to this country and work very hard to provide a good life for the family. Karen admires their perseverance and intelligence. She participated in the 2007 and 2008 Scripps National Spelling Bees, tying for 64th place in 2008.

Speller No. 273, Andrew Grose
*Wisconsin State Journal*, Madison, Wisconsin
Age 20, 8th grade
School: Lake Country Academy
Hometown: Sheboygan, Wisconsin

Andrew is active in Theater for Young Audiences where he has appeared in numerous plays and musicals including High School Musical and The Wizard of Oz. He has been involved in other aspects of theater production, including lighting and scenery and he recently expanded his skills by directing his first play. A music enthusiast, Andrew sings, plays piano and percussion, and was honored at music camp with an award for musicianship. Andrew's favorite sport is tennis and he plays in United States Tennis Association tournaments year-round. Andrew loves exploring exotic cuisines and is learning to cook. Andrew participated in the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee. His aunt, Marie Grose Campbell, participated in the 1973 Scripps National Spelling Bee.