



**News release**

**March 9, 2020**

## **Student advances to state National Geographic GeoBee**

*Mill Creek Elementary was one of nearly 10,000 schools competing nationally*



From left to right, Andy (Ji-Hoon) Park, Sorin Bulgannawar and Maddy Swanson beaming with joy with their certificates of achievement.

The National Geographic GeoBee is a rigorous academic competition challenging students in grades four through eight (4 – 8) to learn and apply geography concepts. Nationwide, nearly 10,000 schools competed, one of which was Mill Creek Elementary in the Everett School District.

Through a generous grant from the Everett Public Schools Foundation and the support of Principal Brenda Fuglevand, students in Emily Brunswick-Nelson's 4/5 Highly Capable classroom were able to purchase study resources and pay the entry fees for the competition.

The rigorous competition tests students' knowledge of both the United States as well as the world. Students compete in seven rounds of questions before moving to the semifinals.

At the classroom level, three students were selected as first, second and third place winners. Student Maddy Swanson said, "It was hard to answer seven rounds of questions, but I felt more relaxed as each round passed." Swanson finished third in the classroom competition behind Andy Park, who finished second.

Placing first at the classroom level and first in the regional competition, Sorin Bulgannawar stated, "I felt so happy, I could cry, and I did!" Student, Sherry Zhu, commented that they were tears of joy. The competition takes months of preparation and studying both in and out of class for students to learn the materials necessary to be competitive.

Brunswick-Nelson adds, "I am proud of the determination students show in learning the complex material over the few short months of preparation. The National Geographic GeoBee teaches students so much more than geography. Through the competition, students learn about persevering in difficult subjects, utilizing deductive reasoning skills and applying critical thinking when evaluating answers."

As for the next step, Bulgannawar will advance to the state competition on March 27, to compete as one of the top 100 ranked students in Washington state, which has been switched to an online format ensuring all qualifiers have a safe and fair opportunity.

The designated state champion from each state will advance to the National Championship and compete for cash awards and college scholarships.

Bulgannawar is nervous about the next step but he is most excited about the chance to compete nationally. Assuredly, his teacher and classmates will be cheering for him throughout the entire process.

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**For more information:**

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