



Sept. 21, 2016

## **SCRIPPS NATIONAL SPELLING BEE RETURNS TO D.C. FOR POLITICIANS VS. PRESS EVENT TONIGHT**

**CINCINNATI** – The Scripps National Spelling Bee is returning to the nation’s capital in the final weeks leading up to Election Day to administer the “Politicians vs. Press” event hosted by the National Press Club today at 7 p.m. In this spelling competition, members of Congress and D.C.-area journalists will battle for team supremacy as they take on the dictionary to see which individual walks away with the honorary title of champion.

For the politicians’ team, participants include Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill.; Rep. Don Beyer, D-Va.; Rep. Ted Deutch, D-Fla.; Rep. Derek Kilmer, D-Wash.; Rep. Scott Peters, D-Calif.; and Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif.

The press team includes Karoun Demirjian, reporter for The Washington Post; Clinton Yates, blog writer from ESPN’s “The Undeclared”; Art Swift, managing editor at Gallup.com; Carrie Budoff Brown, editor of Politico; Angela Greiling Keane, formerly of Bloomberg; Rod Kuckro, reporter for E&E News; Emmarie Huetteman, reporter for The New York Times; and Carrie Johnson, reporter for NPR.

Unlike the Scripps National Spelling Bee, where the champion cannot return to compete in the National Finals, in this competition, Rep. Beyer is returning to defend his title. It is a rematch between the congressman and Demirjian, who were the last two spellers in 2015.

“This event is great fun and it is an honor for the Scripps National Spelling Bee to administer this for the National Press Club,” said Paige Kimble, executive director of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. “To have the opportunity to put words in the spotlight, especially so close to the elections, signifies the popularity of the event.”

“The National Press Club is honored to partner with the Scripps National Spelling Bee to pit journalists against members of Congress in a competition for the best speller,” said Thomas Burr, Club president and Washington correspondent for The Salt Lake Tribune. “At a time of heightened partisanship, it’s great to have a night where journalists and politicians can compete in a fun event that raises money for promotion of the freedom of the press.”

Dr. Jacques Bailly, official pronouncer of the Scripps National Spelling Bee, will serve in that same role for this spirited rivalry. The Scripps National Spelling Bee and its presenting sponsor Kindle are both internationally recognized brands that share in the belief that reading is critically important to a child’s lifelong achievement.

Blake Giddens, one of the Bee’s judges at the national finals and the 1983 national champion, will be the head judge. Joining him are the 2016 Scripps National Spelling Bee co-champions Jairam Hathwar, from Painted Post, New York, and Nihar Janga, from Austin, Texas, who also

will serve as judges for the National Press Club event and will ring one of two bells. In this competition, the participants can misspell one time before being eliminated from the competition. There is the regular-sized bell widely known by Bee fans and there is a much larger bell used specifically for this event when a participant is knocked out of the competition.

This is the second year in a row for this contest, but its origin dates back to 1913, when the National Press Club held a spelling bee pitting elected officials against news reporters. President Woodrow Wilson and members of his Cabinet were among the 1,000 people who showed up to watch a representative from Ohio win.

In 2013, on the 100th anniversary of that very first bee, Sen. Tim Kaine, R-Va., took the title and now is the vice presidential nominee for the Democratic Party.

All proceeds from the event will benefit the National Press Club Journalism Institute, which provides training, resources, education and career development programs to media and communications professionals; awards scholarships to the next generation of journalists; and continually recognizes excellence in journalism and advocates for press freedom worldwide.

#### **About the Scripps National Spelling Bee:**

The Scripps National Spelling Bee is the nation's largest and longest-running educational program. 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 of their lives. Visit [spellingbee.com](http://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.

#### **About Scripps:**

[The E.W. Scripps Company](http://The E.W. Scripps Company) (NYSE: SSP) serves audiences and businesses through a growing portfolio of television, radio and digital media brands. Scripps is one of the nation's largest independent TV station owners, with 33 television stations in 24 markets and a reach of nearly one in five U.S. households. It also owns 34 radio stations in eight markets. Scripps also runs an expanding collection of local and national digital journalism and information businesses, including satire and humor video and web brand [Cracked](http://Cracked), podcast industry leader [Midroll Media](http://Midroll Media) and over-the-top video news service [Newsy](http://Newsy). Scripps also produces television shows including ["THE LIST"](http://THE LIST) and ["The Now"](http://The Now) and runs an award-winning investigative reporting newsroom in Washington, D.C. Founded in 1878, Scripps has held for decades to the motto, "Give light and the people will find their own way."

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