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SCRIPPS NATIONAL SPELLING BEE INTRODUCES RSVBEE; PROGRAM INVITES MORE PARTICIPANTS FOR THE NATIONAL FINALS

CINCINNATI — The Scripps National Spelling Bee is launching RSVBee, an invitational program creating more opportunities for champion spellers to compete in the National Finals in Oxon Hill, Maryland, next year.

With RSVBee, parents can apply on behalf of their children for the opportunity to share the same National Finals experience as spellers who advance after winning a sponsor's local spelling bee. To be eligible for the new program, spellers must attend a school officially enrolled in the Scripps National Spelling Bee and be a current school spelling bee champion and/or former participant in the National Finals.

"We continue to explore ways to evolve our program to create even more opportunities for children," said Paige Kimble, executive director of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. "Participation in the National Finals is a life-changing experience for children. RSVBee levels the playing field for children participating in some of the larger or more competitive local bee programs. It also provides a straight-to-the-National Finals pathway for children who have previously been declared champions of their local bee programs."

The Scripps National Spelling Bee will approve up to 225 RSVBee applicants for invitations. If 225 or fewer apply for RSVBee, all eligible applicants will receive invitations. If there are more than 225 RSVBee applications, a point system will determine which applicants receive invitations. Spellers with previous experience in the National Finals will receive more points, as well as older students because they are closer to reaching the age eligibility limit.

Applicants with the most points will receive invitations, up to the 225 limit. In the event of more than 225 applicants and a tie score for some, the Scripps National Spelling Bee will send invitations to those who applied earliest in the process. Applying early gives an advantage over those who wait.

Local bee sponsors that coordinate a regional bee event — businesses, universities, community organizations and local media — remain valued partners in continuing those strong community traditions. Since the first national spelling bee in 1925, where nine students competed, local bee sponsors have paved the way for students to advance to the National Finals. RSVBee will augment the opportunity for children to participate by creating a parallel path for entry into the National Finals.

[This video](#) offers a quick explanation of RSVBee, and [this FAQ](#) offers answers to many likely questions. Parents of students can apply online at spellingbee.com/rsvbee between now and March 23, 2018. Once up to 225 invitations go out, spellers and their families will have one week to confirm their acceptance and pay the \$750 participation fee. Applying does not exclude spellers from participating in any

classroom, school, district, local or regional bee events. RSVBee applicants who earn spots in the National Finals by winning their regional spelling bee may withdraw their application by contacting the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

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 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 (NYSE: SSP) serves audiences and businesses through a growing portfolio of television, radio and digital media brands. With 33 television stations, Scripps is one of the nation's largest independent TV station owners. Scripps runs an expanding collection of local and national digital journalism and content businesses, including Newsy, the next-generation national news network; podcast industry leader Midroll Media; and fast-growing national broadcast networks Bounce, Grit, Escape and Laff. Scripps produces original programming including "Pickler & Ben," runs an award-winning investigative reporting newsroom in Washington, D.C., and is the longtime steward of the Scripps National Spelling Bee. 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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