Give light and the people will find their own way

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Faizan Zaki declared champion of the 2025 Scripps National Spelling Bee

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CINCINNATI, May 29, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- Faizan Zaki, (FAY-zahn ZAH-kee) a 13-year-old speller from Allen, Texas, is the champion of the 2025 Scripps National Spelling Bee.



Zaki earned the prestigious title in round 21 when he correctly spelled "éclaircissement," which is defined as "the clearing up of something obscure: enlightenment."

Adam Symson, president and CEO of The E.W. Scripps Company (NASDAQ: SSP), presented the championship trophy moments before ION signed off from the 97th Scripps National Spelling Bee.

Watch the winning moment.

"Faizan exemplified the determination that defines a champion," said Symson. His unwavering focus and preparation led to a well-earned victory tonight on the Bee's largest stage.

"In this landmark 100th year of the Scripps National Spelling Bee, Scripps is honored to celebrate Faizan's extraordinary achievement as well as the spellers throughout the Bee's history who continue to inspire millions. Their stories remind us of the shared joy in cheering for their success, reinforcing the Bee's legacy as a beloved tradition that, for a century, has championed connection, resilience and the limitless potential of young minds."

This was Zaki's fourth time participating in the Scripps National Spelling Bee. A 7th grader at C.M. Rice Middle School, he finished second in 2024 in a spell-off to Bruhat Soma. Zaki is only the fifth speller in Bee history to win after coming in second place the year before. He tied for 21st place in 2023 and 370th place in 2019. He was sponsored by the Dallas Sports Commission.

He receives:

- From Scripps: a $50,000 cash prize, commemorative medal and the Scripps Cup, the official championship trophy of the Scripps National Spelling Bee;
- From Merriam-Webster: a $2,500 cash prize and reference library from the Bee's dictionary partner;
- From Encyclopædia Britannica: $400 of reference works, including a 1768 Encyclopædia Britannica Replica Set and a three-year membership to Britannica Online Premium;
- From Scholastic: $1,000 Scholastic Dollars to be donated to the school of the champion's choice in their honor;
- From News-O-Matic: A five-year subscription to News-O-Matic's K-8 news platform awarded to the champion's school.

Sarvadnya Kadam of Visalia, California, representing Tulare County Office of Education, placed second in the competition and will receive $25,000.

Sarv Dharavane of Dunwoody, Georgia, representing Georgia Association of Educators, will receive $15,000.

The 97th Scripps National Spelling Bee took place at the Gaylord National Resort & Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland. Competition began Tuesday with 242 spellers. Round-by-round results are available at spellingbee.com.

Photos from the 2025 Scripps National Spelling Bee are available on the Scripps National Spelling Bee's official Flickr page at flickr.com/scrippsbee/.

Watch the finals again tonight on Scripps News
The finals aired exclusively on Scripps Networks, which includes popular entertainment networks ION, Bounce, Grit, ION Mystery and Laff, as well as its free, ad-supported streaming channels ION Plus, Bounce XL, Grit Xtra and Laff More. An encore of the finals will be available on Scripps News tonight from 11 p.m. ET to 1 a.m. The Scripps Networks can be found free over-the-air as well as on cable, satellite and streaming platforms.

Media contact: *Becca McCarter, 513-410-2425, Rebecca.Mccarter@scripps.com*

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. By inspiring the exploration of words, the Scripps National Spelling Bee illuminates pathways to lifelong curiosity, celebrates academic achievement and enriches communities. 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 (NASDAQ: SSP).

About Scripps
The E.W. Scripps Company (NASDAQ: SSP) is a diversified media company focused on creating connection. As one of the nation's largest local TV broadcasters, Scripps serves communities with quality, objective local journalism and operates a portfolio of more than 60 stations in 40+ markets. Scripps reaches households across the U.S. with national news outlets Scripps News and Court TV and popular entertainment brands ION, Bounce, Grit, ION Mystery, ION Plus and Laff. Scripps is the nation's largest holder of broadcast spectrum. Its Scripps Sports division serves professional and college sports leagues, conferences and teams with local market depth and national broadcast reach of up to 100% of TV households. Founded in 1878, Scripps is the steward of the Scripps National Spelling Bee, and its longtime motto is: "Give light and the people will find their own way."



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