

Blackburn College Hosts 300 Regional High School Students For Annual Science Scholarship Competition

April 4 2023 9:40 AM





CARLINVILLE - March marked a triumphant return for one of Blackburn College's most beloved events, Science Day. Three hundred junior and senior school students from 13 schools across the region traveled to the Carlinville campus to showcase their science knowledge with the hope of winning individual Blackburn scholarships. Each school also competes as a group to earn recognition and cash prizes in three scientific categories. The College awarded more than \$15,000 to winning participants and top schools during the March 17 event.

The competition began with participants taking biology, chemistry, or physics exams. The high school students then have the opportunity to experience college-level psychology, computer science, biology, and chemistry courses as they participate in breakout demonstrations. Throughout the day, professors and Blackburn students working the event observe the aptitude and participation of each high school student.

"During the event, I heard participants talking about all the demonstrations and discussing which ones they enjoyed most," said Holly Metzger, a junior biology major at Blackburn from Shelbyville, IL. "I have had emails from schools thanking us for how much fun their students had at this event and how excited they are for the next one."

This year marked the 34th year of Blackburn's celebration of scientific excellence and the first event since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Metzger helped organize this year's event with fellow biology majors Logan Ullrich, a junior from Diamond, IL, and Alexia Mosby, a sophomore from Carlinville, IL. The breakout demonstrations they helped coordinate included hands-on demonstrations of chemical reactions and microscope use, animal handling in the College's Vivarium, sessions dedicated to video game design, and an eye-opening exploration of the exciting ways human minds work and how it impacts daily life.

"The participants seemed most excited about all of the demonstrations and the awards ceremony, including the suspense of learning the winners of awards in each category and cheering on their teachers and friends," Dr. Samantha Kahl, Professor of Ecology & Biology and Blackburn graduate, shared about the event.

“Top Student” awards and scholarships were presented to (alphabetical order):

- One student from Auburn High School (Auburn, IL)
- Two students from Carlinville High School (Carlinville, IL)
- One student from Gillespie High School (Gillespie, IL)
- Four students from Highland High School (Highland, IL)

- One student from Illini Central High School (Mason City, IL)
- Five students from Mascoutah High School (Mascoutah, IL)
- Two students from Pleasant Plains High School (Pleasant Plains, IL)

“Top School” recognition and prize money were presented to (alphabetical order):

- Athens High School (Athens, IL)
- Auburn High School (Auburn, IL)
- Carlinville High School (Carlinville, IL)
- Highland High School (Highland, IL)
- Mascoutah High School (Mascoutah, IL)
- Pleasant Plains High School (Pleasant Plains, IL)
- Rochester High School (Rochester, IL)





About Blackburn College

Founded in 1837, Blackburn College is a four-year, Presbyterian-related, co-educational liberal arts college located in Carlinville, IL. One of only ten federally-recognized Work Colleges, Blackburn has the only program in the nation fully managed by students. Balancing academic rigor and experiential learning, each student at Blackburn gains substantial experience and develops critical skills by contributing to their community, all while building a resume and earning their degree. U.S. News & World Report has recognized Blackburn College as one of the best colleges in the midwest region for 2023. Blackburn has also been named a Top Performer for Social Mobility in their Best Colleges guide for 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. The Washington Monthly ranked Blackburn first in Illinois for performance by students receiving Pell Grants in 2023 and twice previously named Blackburn as the best baccalaureate college in Illinois.

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