



WrestleMania® Reading Challenge Crowns National Champs

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ORLANDO, Fla.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--

Hometown hero David Silva of the Orlando Public Library and Ajoura Gwinn of the Carnegie Library of Homestead, Pa., were crowned 2008 WrestleMania Reading Challenge National Champions. Silva, the national middle school reading champ, and Gwinn, the national high school reading champ, received the coveted trophies along with ringside seats to WrestleMania XXIV at the Florida Citrus Bowl.

This is the second year of the national competition held by WWE and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) to reach reluctant readers and get more teens reading beyond Teen Read Week(TM), YALSA's annual initiative to encourage teens to read for fun. WWE plans to continue to expand the reading challenge competition as part of a new initiative to extend its popularity with youth.

Silva and Gwinn had the most correct responses to questions about the books "Stuck in Neutral" by Terry Trueman and "Ball Don't Lie" by Matt de la Pena. The authors served as judges while the finalists were quizzed by WWE Superstars CM Punk, The Miz and Matt Striker. Punk, Miz and Striker all appeared in posters distributed nationwide to encourage libraries' participation in the WrestleMania Reading Challenge.

From the more than 30,000 participants in more than 1,170 libraries across the country who competed, 10 finalists were selected to face off in Orlando to become national champions. Gwinn and four others competed in the 9-12 grade division, Silva and the other four finalists competed in the 7-8 grade division. Each finalist won airfare, hotel, and spending cash for two to Orlando, tickets to WrestleMania XXIV, \$2,000 for their public or school library and the opportunity to compete in the WrestleMania Reading Challenge finals.

The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) is the fastest-growing division of the American Library Association. For more than 50 years, YALSA has been the world leader in selecting books, films and audiobooks for teens. For more information about YALSA or for lists of recommended reading, viewing and listening, go to www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists, or contact the YALSA office by phone, 800-545-2433, ext. 4390; or e-mail: yalsa@ala.org.

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Editor's Note

This year's regional finalists are in two categories, grades 7-8 and grades 9-12. Finalists in the grades 7-8 category are:

- Chris Thompson, Cave City, Ky., from LeGrande Elementary
- Laquan Deen, Homestead, Pa., from Carnegie Library of Homestead
- Emily Hardy, Seattle, Wash., from McClure Middle School

-- Beau Snoad, Napoleon, Ohio, from Napoleon Middle School
Library

-- David Silva, Orlando, Fla., from Orlando Public Library

Finalists in the grades 9-12 category are:

-- Zacary Harper, Lake Wales, Fla., from Lake Wales Public
Library

-- Ajoura Gwinn, Munhall, Pa., from Carnegie Library of Homestead

-- Amber Dales, Des Moines, Iowa, from Southeast Polk High School

-- Arun Natarajan, Hicksville, N.Y., from Hicksville Public
Library

-- Kady Marie Peters, Orlando, Fla., from Orlando Public Library

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