

## AIAA GHS Aerospace/Aviation Buzzword Challenge

Congratulations to the high-flying winners of our Aerospace/Aviation Buzzword challenge, a 50-question online game that covered aerospace and aviation topics in history, pop culture, science and technology, current events, literature, fine arts, and geography. The game, which drew over 400 players worldwide, was active Sept. 15-20, 2022 to celebrate the upcoming launch of NASA's Artemis I mission.



First, in the middle school division, is **Andrew Gao** (365 points). Andrew is an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at Chenery Middle School in Massachusetts, where he's been active in quiz bowl for the past three years. Andrew tells us he enjoys watching rocket launches – especially the first crewed test flight of SpaceX's Crew Dragon, which fell on his 11<sup>th</sup> birthday. Andrew is looking forward to seeing NASA's Artemis I launch.

The winner of the high school division is **Ethan Burks** (540 points). Ethan is a homeschooled senior who competes in quiz bowl through the Norfolk Academic Guild in Virginia. Ethan says he's loved rocketry and "the engineering behind it" for a very long time and plans to study aeronautical or astronautical engineering when he goes off to college next year. Ethan writes, "I've loved that humans have the ability to be able to send robotic envoys into space, and I can't wait to be a part of that fantastic legacy and have my own hands in that wonderful great beyond, and I'm proud to be imparting my own joy for spaceflight, rocketry, and all things aerospace onto the next generation by teaching aerospace classes at my local Civil Air Patrol squadron."

**Sarah Mueller** (611 points) from Virginia, and **Alex Pyle** (612 points) from New York, are our co-champs in the college division.

Sarah is a graduate student in mechanical engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology, where she also plays on their quiz bowl team. She tells us, "As a kid, I used

to be scared of flying, and decided to face that fear by learning all I could about airplanes.” Sarah earned a bachelor’s degree in aerospace engineering from Auburn University.

Alex is a student at State University of New York at Binghamton, working toward a bachelor’s degree in applied physics, with plans to pursue a graduate degree in materials science. He previously played quiz bowl at Troy High School from 10<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> grade. Alex says he’s an “eclipse chaser,” having seen one total solar and five total lunar eclipses. He plans to travel to Australia in April and Mexico in 2024.

With 240 participants, the open division is by far our largest division. Our top three scorers are:

**Andre LeClair** (627 points). Andre is an aerospace engineer doing system-level thermo-fluid modeling at NASA Marshall Space Flight Center in Alabama. He has a bachelor’s degree in chemical engineering, as well as a master’s and Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from the University of Alabama Huntsville (UAH). Andre also played quiz bowl in junior high and high school.

**Shae Williams** (631 points). Shae is an aerospace engineer and member of AIAA’s Niagara Frontier Section. Shae, who works at Moog in New York, earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Georgia Tech, and a Ph.D. from Purdue University. Shae played quiz bowl at Georgia Tech during his years as both an undergraduate and graduate student.

**Joe Nutter** (633 points). An extra shout-out goes to Joe! He is both the open division top scorer *and* the overall top scorer. Joe is a management consultant and aviation enthusiast based in Georgia. In his free time, he’s a student pilot, and he’s working to finish qualifying for his pilot’s license. Joe has had a lifelong fascination with air and space flight. He studied physics and economics at Michigan State University. Like all our other winners, he played quiz bowl competitively. Joe played at Walnut Hills High School in Cincinnati, Ohio, as well as Michigan State University.

Congratulations again to all the winners! They’ll each receive a personalized trophy from the AIAA Greater Huntsville Section to celebrate their stellar performances. AIAA GHS appreciates The Boeing Company’s sponsorship of this special event. Thank you to the National Academic Quiz Tournaments (NAQT) for writing and recording a superb question set.

The final standings for the Buzzword game can be viewed on NAQT’s [results page](#).