



## **NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 13, 2009

### CONTACTS:

Ann Williams, ExCEL Academic League – 360.571.0718  
[mamabearwilliams@yahoo.com](mailto:mamabearwilliams@yahoo.com)

Dan Williams, Washington Sea Grant – 206.616.6353  
[dw7@u.washington.edu](mailto:dw7@u.washington.edu)

### **Vancouver's ExCEL Homeschoolers Capture Top Prize at 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Orca Bowl**

For an unprecedented third year in a row, students from the ExCEL Academic League homeschool in Vancouver, Wash., captured first place at the annual Orca Bowl competition.

Held Feb. 7 at the University of Washington's Seattle campus, this Knowledge Bowl-style academic challenge attracted a total of 11 teams from around the state. The regional competition is one of 25 being held throughout the nation this month.

The ExCEL homeschoolers proved outstanding in a round-robin series of competitions against the other teams, answering difficult, rapid-fire questions about the biology, chemistry, geology, physics, history and economics of the ocean.

This year's team consisted of Annika and Brita Horlings, Heidi Osborne, Jennifer Chang and Trisha Williams. The students were coached by former Orca Bowl team member William Schlecht and Ann Williams, Education Chairwoman for ExCEL Academic League.

As statewide champions, the ExCEL team will take an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., to compete in the National Ocean Sciences Bowl in April.

“The competition was tough, and we had an entirely new team this year,” said coach Schlecht. “However, they all had a strong interest in ocean science, and it paid off.”

The Orca Bowl is part of the National Ocean Sciences Bowl program, presented in cooperation with the University of Washington’s College of Ocean and Fishery Sciences, with support from the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, Centers for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence – Ocean Learning Communities, Seattle Aquarium, Pacific Science Center, Highline Community College’s Marine and Science Technology center, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and many other agencies and businesses.

The National Ocean Sciences Bowl is a program of the Consortium for Ocean Leadership and the NOSB host institutions, with generous support of U.S. government agencies through the National Oceanographic Partnership. Approximately 2,000 students from more than 400 high schools are participating in regional competitions this year. Through this educational forum, the NOSB strives to encourage and support the next generation of marine scientists, policy makers, teachers, explorers, researchers, technicians, environmental advocates and informed citizens.

Based at the University of Washington, Washington Sea Grant funds marine research and works with communities and businesses to manage and protect marine resources.

# # #