



Berks County Intermediate Unit
An Educational Service Agency

P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Second Annual *YOU BE THE CHEMIST* Slated for February 2, 2008

Reading, PA - Local middle school students will put their chemistry knowledge on display at the second annual *You Be The Chemist (YBTC) Challenge* on February 2, 2008, from 9–11:30 a.m. at the Berks County Intermediate Unit (BCIU).

The BCIU is sponsoring the Berks County Challenge in conjunction with Brenntag North America, Inc., whose North American headquarters are located in Reading. The winner will advance to the national competition on June 13 at the Chemical Heritage Foundation in Philadelphia, where the Berks County champion will compete against other students from across the country who have competed in similar regional contests. Last year's *YBTC Challenge* winner, Brook Bi of Exeter Township, went on to win the national title.

YBTC is a question and answer forum for students in grades 5-8 that supports an ongoing need to develop an interest in chemistry at a young age. Created by the Chemical Educational Foundation (CEF), the event aims to promote the science of chemistry, the benefits of chemicals, and the importance of chemical safety awareness in order to help reverse the shortage of chemists, engineers, and scientists in chemical industries. The Challenge also is a means to foster a continuing relationship between the business and education community.

“This event represents the tremendous value that can be achieved by cooperative efforts between education and industry,” said Chet Murphy, vice president market development for Brenntag North America. “The future development of the sciences and interest in chemistry are best achieved by developing an interest at an early age. We are very excited about the level of engagement by the BCIU and the opportunity we are able to provide our young students.”

Twenty-three students (18 from Exeter Township and five from Wilson) will participate in this year's event. Now entering its fourth year, the challenge currently involves 20 states, 15 chemical companies, and over 1,000 students. The eventual goal of CEF is to have *You Be The Chemist* in all 50 states.

