



Thursday, May 18, 2017

## “I say science, you say genius” chant 200 students at inaugural rap battle in Calgary

**CALGARY, AB** — You’ve probably never heard lyrics about the endocrine system but at today’s Science Genius Rap Battles students did just that – and more – in a high energy smash up of hip hop and science.

Grade 7 student Russ Pearson from the Edge school claimed the top prize in the *Top Performance* category for his rap about the solar system. The Yeung Thugs, a grade six class from Sir Wilfrid Laurier, took the *Most Creative Lyrics* prize for their song about aerodynamics. Grade 11 student Diana Kagan from Robert Thirsk School perfected the mixture of science and hip hop, and was awarded *Top Science Content* for wowing the audience with a piece about hormones.

Today’s contest was the culmination of weeks of practice with hip hop ambassadors visiting four Calgary area schools during their science classes over the past months. Dozens of students from Grades 6 to 12 performed their own raps onstage in front of celebrity judges and a packed house of students and the public at the National Music Centre. Judges included local hip hop artist Sinzere, Dragon Fli Empire’s Tarik Robinson, and Kym Butler, Artist Program Lead at Studio Bell, along with Claudia Bustos from Beakerhead, who holds a BSc in neuroscience.

Science Genius was born in New York City by Professor Dr. Christopher Emdin. The big idea: bringing science to meet students on their cultural turf. The approach to science is meant to empower students who might otherwise risk becoming disengaged with school.

In this first year, teachers remarked that participating students had higher than average class attendance when the Science Genius program was active.

“Every student should have the chance to be exposed to the amazing wonder and power of science and engineering,” says Carolyn Wallington, Beakerhead’s Education Program Manager. “The power of music and storytelling has proven as a profound way to engage – giving students not only a personalized means to learn and explore these subjects, but also to build confidence in themselves through performance.”

Science Genius Rap Battles in Calgary is a partnership between Beakerhead, the National Music Centre and GlobalFest, and supported by NSERC.

This event was part of Science Odyssey, a celebration of science, technology, engineering and mathematics that takes place across Canada every May, powered by NSERC.

### **Media Inquires:**

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