

Coachella Valley high school students compete on TV grammar show

By Mike Singer

PALM DESERT, Calif. – To help improve English grammar among Coachella Valley high school students, Cal State San Bernardino's Palm Desert Campus will host its Second Annual Coachella Valley Grammar Bee.

Produced by CSUSB's Palm Desert Campus, Brookfield Productions and KCET Desert Cities, this is the first show produced for television that focuses on grammar. After a successful debut in 2007 in which it aired multiple times on KCET Desert Cities, the Grammar Bee show returns with a Nov. 16 taping at KCET studios in Los Angeles. The show will air on KCET Desert Cities in early 2009.

Jason Gray-Stanford, who co-stars in the hit TV series "Monk," returns as host of the 60-minute program, where students are asked to answer questions about grammar, punctuation, usage and style.

Jane Straus, author of "The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation," will return as the show's judge, and Regina Williams of the new hit TV series, "High School Musical: Get in the Picture," will choreograph the show's musical numbers.

"We want to make good grammar cool, so we've developed a game show format with high school students competing for college scholarships," said Fern Field, the show's executive producer and artist-in-residence at CSUSB's Palm Desert Campus. "The top winner will receive a \$5,000 scholarship, with smaller scholarships being offered to the second and third place winners."

The concept, which Field developed with the participation of CSUSB Palm Desert Campus students and interns, is designed to serve as a pilot program for communities across the country. The goal is to make English grammar accessible and easy to understand for people of all ages, including those who speak English as a second language, Field said.

Cal State San Bernardino's Palm Desert Campus is developing grammar-related materials and curriculum to be included in an Grammar Bee outreach program for students, parents and teachers.

Applications from high schools are due by Sept. 22. For applications and more information, visit www.GrammarBee.com.

For more information about CSUSB's Palm Desert Campus, please contact Mike Singer in the campus's Office of Public Affairs at (760) 341-2883, ext. 78107, and visit <http://pdc.csusb.edu>.