



# City of Orange Township

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## ***News Release***

For Release: Immediate

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### **Orange Youth Advances to Elks Hoop Shoot State Tournament Finals. Places Fourth**

Orange resident and Orange Middle School Student Keshawn Alexander, representing Orange Elks Lodge # 135 advanced to the state finals of the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the USA National Hoop Shoot contest held at Woodbridge High School.

After winning in the local competition held at Orange Middle School in conjunction with the Orange Recreation Department, Keshawn advanced to the District Finals for his age group (12-13 yr old) which was held in Nutley N.J. Keshawn made an impressive 21-25 free throws to advance to Woodbridge for the State Finals. The finals were held on Sunday, February 8, 2009 and included the boys and girls for each age group who came out as District winners. Twelve districts from all over New Jersey competed for the 12-13 year old final in which Keshawn hit 19-25 free throws and placed fourth out of the twelve district winners.

Over 3 million youngsters from all fifty states participate yearly in the "Hoop Shoot" from local contests to the National Finals where six champions are named. The free throw program started in 1972 on a National level. It provides a spirited competition and the chance for youngsters' to develop new friendships. Winners and their families also travel to State, Regional, and National competitions, courtesy of the Elks. The names of the National winners are inscribed in the National Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Orange Elks Lodge #135 Youth Activity Chairman Jim Reitberger was present at the contest along with committee member Matt Mulligan Jr. to cheer on Keshawn. Tuneeka Alexander, Keshawn's mother was also present along with Ross Wright of the Orange Recreation Department to support him.

"Keshawn really worked hard and his performance showed it. He came in fourth against the best of twelve districts from around N.J. and we are extremely proud of him" said Jim Reitberger,. He added "Being the spirited competitor that Keshawn showed he is, he was disappointed and assured us he will be back next year to take another shot at it".

Committee member Matt Mulligan Jr. commented, "Between the Orange Elks and the help of Keith Pressey and the Orange Recreation Department working together, we can get more participants next year, representing each age group which starts at 8-9 yr olds, 10-11 year olds to 12-13 year olds and includes boys and girls competing. I urge all citizens of Orange to join us in congratulating Keshwan Alexander for his performance this year and to stay tuned for the next competition."

**Photo: Left to right:** Jimmy Reitberger, Ross Wright, Tuneeka Alexander (Keshawn's mother), Keshawn Alexander, Rich Barone, Exalted Ruler, Orange Elks Lodge #135. Keshawn was presented with a Certificate for winning the Local and District Competition.