



MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL MAGNET  
FOUNDATION INC.



P.O. Box 101  
Kensington, MD 20895-0101

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:** Sherrie Emoto, board@mbhsmagnet.org

**Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Students Receive  
Second and Third Place at Washington Regional  
Junior Science and Humanities Symposium**

**Silver Spring, MD**—Stephanie Rager of Olney and Sean Nair of Potomac, both of the Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program, participated as two of the five regional finalists in the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS) Greater Washington, D.C. Regional Competition at Georgetown University last month. The prestigious JSHS Program promotes original research and experimentation in the sciences, engineering, and mathematics and publicly recognizes students for outstanding achievement. It is jointly sponsored by the United States Departments of the Army, Navy, and Air Force in cooperation with leading research universities throughout the nation and the Department of Defense.

Students from Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia submitted their research papers to the JSHS Greater Washington, D.C. regional competition last fall. Georgetown University professors read through these papers and selected five students to present their research at the regional symposium. Each presentation lasted eight minutes and was followed by a five-minute question and answer session with a panel of three judges comprised of professors, scientists, and other high school students.

Stephanie Rager went on to receive second place and was awarded a \$1,500 scholarship for her original research entitled “Exploring computational and topological validation of human protein-protein interactions and resultant networks,” which was completed under the mentorship of Dr. Alexander Goncarenco of the National Center for Biotechnology Information, National Institutes of Health. She will be given an all-expense paid trip to compete at the 53<sup>rd</sup> National JSHS to be held on April 29-May 2 in Hunt Valley, MD. There she will have the opportunity to present her research, along with 229 other first- and second-place regional winners, for a chance of earning one of 21 tuition-based scholarships in seven categories and a trip to the London

International Youth Science Forum to be held July 22-August 5 at Imperial College London.

Sean Nair earned third place and was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship for his paper entitled “Mechanisms through which Phospholipase D3 Mutants associated with Late-Onset Alzheimer’s Disease affect Beta Amyloid Production,” which was completed under the mentorship of Dr. Michael Frohman and Dr. Devi Ekanayake, both of Stony Brook University. He will have the opportunity to present a research poster on his work at the National JSHS.

Stephanie Rager expresses her gratitude and comments on her JSHS experience, “I am extremely appreciative of the support provided by my mentor, Dr. Alexander Goncarencu, and of the strong background in computer science, physics, statistics, and biology that the Blair Magnet has given me. Speaking at JSHS was a wonderful opportunity to present my work to knowledgeable scientists and students outside of my field and to receive their feedback.”

Sean Nair graciously comments on his award, “Writing a paper and giving a presentation are extremely important skills to have, but they are two very different forms of communication. Doing both for this symposium, I learned so much about communicating concisely and effectively. I am honored to have been able to present alongside the other four incredible students and am thankful for the support I received from my mentors, teachers, and the Blair Magnet.”



Montgomery Blair Magnet seniors Stephanie Rager (center) and Sean Nair (left) were awarded second and third place, respectively, at the JSHS Greater Washington, D.C. Regional Competition. Blair Magnet science and research teacher Ms. Angelique Bosse (right) and Blair Magnet coordinator Mr. Peter Ostrander observed the competition. (Photo courtesy of Ms. Angelique Bosse)

## **About The Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation**

This organization was founded by a group of concerned students, teachers, administrators, and alumni in 2008. Its purpose is to promote science, mathematics, and computer science education by supporting the Magnet Program at Montgomery Blair High School in its efforts to develop resources and refine practices needed to provide a rigorous and enriched education for students, staff, and the community at large. The Foundation is incorporated in the state of Maryland and is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

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