



MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL MAGNET FOUNDATION INC.



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Montgomery Blair High School Teams Take Top Two Places at Montgomery County Envirothon Competition and Third Place at Maryland Envirothon Competition

Silver Spring, MD—Two teams of students from the Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program, took home first and second place at the 2015 Montgomery County Envirothon, which was held at the county's Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood, MD. Blair's First Place team went on to represent Montgomery County at the 2015 Maryland Envirothon Competition, held June 17-18 at St. Mary's College in St. Mary's City, MD. This team earned third place among eighteen high schools from as many Maryland counties. The award includes \$200 for each of the team members, as well as a painting to be displayed at Blair. In the 25-year history of the Maryland Envirothon, Blair has had multiple first, second, and third place teams and has even placed among the top five teams in the national contest which follows this state competition.

Members of the first place Montgomery County Envirothon team, who are all rising seniors, include Ben Geertsema and Yannie Mei of Silver Spring, Alexander Liu of Bethesda, and Anna Ou and Angel Wen of Gaithersburg. The second place team members from the Montgomery County Envirothon, who are all 2015 graduates, are Leslie Chen of Potomac, Theodore Corrales of Silver Spring, and James Gilkeson, Anna Keleher, and Robert Wiebe of Takoma Park. Blair Magnet chemistry teacher, Mr. Tran Pham, has served as sponsor of all of the school's Envirothon teams for the past 22 years.

To prepare for the Envirothon competition, students study the state's natural resources, learning to identify and categorize plants and animals, perform soil surveys, estimate wood yield from trees, and resolve natural resource issues. Professionals in the fields of soil science, wildlife management, forestry, and environmental engineering volunteer to instruct the students in the areas of wildlife, forestry, aquatics, and soils. Each year there is a special focus environmental issue, as well, with this year's topic concerning urban forestry, which the students must study, as well.

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First place Montgomery County Envirothon team member Ben Geertsema comments on the county and state competitions, “They were cool; we got to apply skills we learned in the Blair Magnet (especially when we studied at the Wallops Island Marine Science Consortium as sophomores) to the tests at Envirothon. We’re really happy with how we did this year, and we’ll be back next year for sure!”



The Montgomery Blair Magnet team of (from left) Ben Geertsema, Angel Wen, Yannick Mei, Anna Ou, and Alexander Liu earned first place in the Montgomery County Envirothon Competition (pictured), as well as third place in the Maryland Envirothon. Coach Tran Pham is second from left, and a competition sponsor appears on the far right.

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The Montgomery Blair Magnet team of (from left) Robert Wiebe, Leslie Chen, Anna Keleher, James Gilkeson, and Theodore Corrales took second place at the Montgomery County Envirothon competition. (Photos courtesy of Mr. Tran Pham)

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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