



MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL MAGNET
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**Nine Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Students Named
Semifinalists in U.S. Biology Team Competition**

Silver Spring, MD—Nine students from the Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program were named as semifinalists for the 2015 U.S. Biology Team on March 13 by the Center for Excellence in Education, the organization which sponsors this search. These students (with each one's grade level) are Alex Miao (10), Arnold Mong (11), and Catherine Xue (12) of Potomac; Bendeguz Offertaler (12), Brenda Wu (12), and Victor Xu (12) of Rockville; Anna Ou (11) of Gaithersburg; Lara Shonkwiler (10) of Takoma Park; and Caitlyn Singam (11) of Bethesda.

In February over 5,000 high school students nationwide took a written biology test, the first part of the USA Biology Olympiad (USABO). This group included 36 from Blair. Based on scores from this exam, around 500, or roughly ten percent, were named as semifinalists for the U.S. Biology Team. During the week of March 23 a semifinal exam was administered, and based on these scores, the twenty members of the team will be announced in April. After further testing on May 31-June 12 at Purdue University, four of these twenty students will be named as members of the 2015 U.S. Biology Team, qualifying them to represent the United States at the 26th International Biology Olympiad to be held in Aarhus, Denmark on July 12-19.

Blair Magnet biology teachers, Ms. Angelique Bosse and Ms. Darcy Sloe, serve as co-sponsors of Blair's biology club, which helps to prepare students for this competition. Ms. Bosse congratulates the students, "As sponsors of the Biology Club, Ms. Sloe and I were pleased that 36 Blair students took the US Biology Olympiad open exam. The students in the club have prepared all school year for this event by attending weekly meetings and doing self-study on their own. We are proud of our nine semifinalists, who scored in the top 10% of the USABO test-takers from 34 states and two international schools."

Semifinalist Brenda Wu expresses her gratitude, "I'm so grateful

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for this recognition, and I want to say thank you in particular to Ms. Sloe for teaching me so much genetics and cellular physiology in her classes. In addition, I am really grateful to the Blair Magnet for offering such a nurturing and encouraging environment for science education, both in the classroom and through extracurricular activities.”



Blair Magnet senior Brenda Wu was named as a semifinalist for the 2015 U.S. Biology Team.
(Photo courtesy of Ms. Nola Chen)

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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