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FOUNDATION INC.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Students
Place among Top Five at
Washington Regional Junior Science and Humanities Symposium**

Silver Spring, MD— Candia Gu of Gaithersburg, Amanda Wessel of Takoma Park, and Jeong-Yoon Wu of Olney, all of the Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program, competed at the Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS) Greater Washington, D.C. Regional Competition, which was held at Georgetown University on March 10-11. Wessel earned second place among all presentations and will advance to compete at the 54th National JSHS to be held on April 27-30 in Dayton, Ohio. Gu also placed among the top five of all presenters and is invited to share her poster at the national convention. Both girls will receive all-expense paid trips to the annual contest. In addition, Wu received third place in the poster competition at the event.

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.

Wessel was awarded a \$1,500 scholarship for earning second place with her original research entitled “Antibody Responses to Malaria Epitopes Presented by an Adjuvated Self-assembling Protein Nanoparticle Vaccine,” which was completed under the mentorship of

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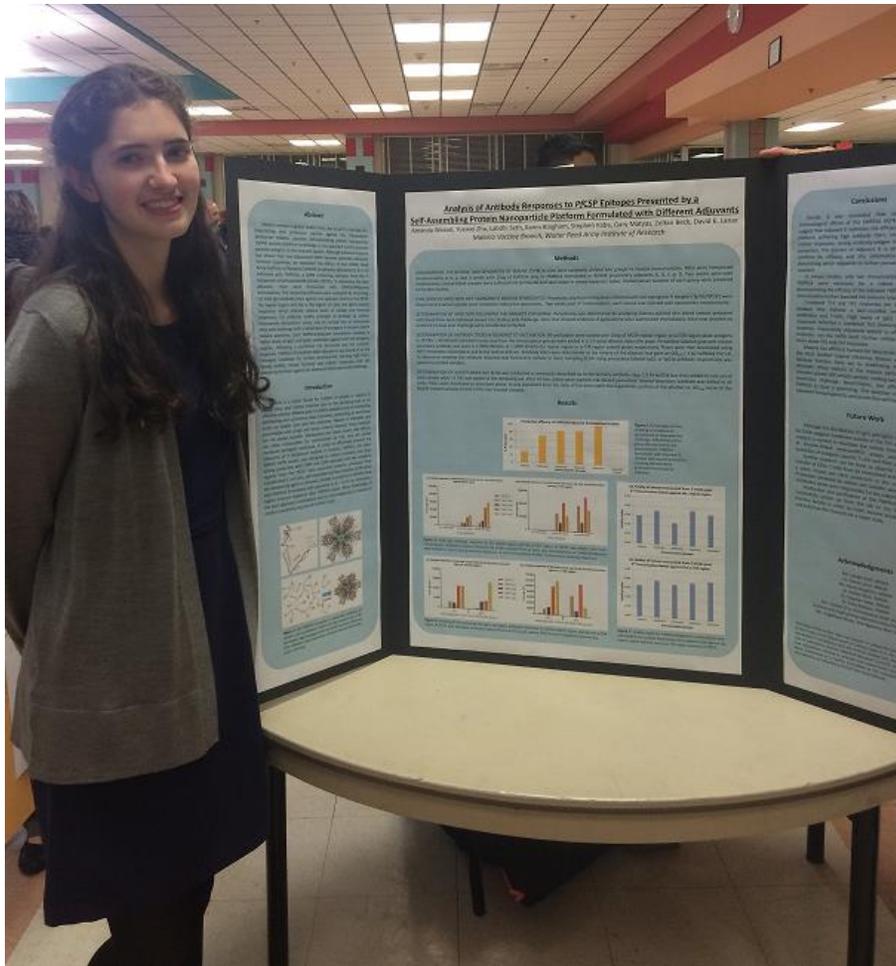
Dr. David Lanar and Labdhi Seth of the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research. At the upcoming national competition, she will have the opportunity to present her research, along with the 229 other first- and second-place regional winners, for a chance of earning one of 21 tuition-based scholarships in seven categories and a trip to the London International Youth Science Forum to be held July 27-August 10 at the Imperial College London.

At the upcoming national JSHS competition, Gu will present a research poster on her original work entitled “Computational Design of a Foot-powered Energy Harvester using Piezoelectric Material.” Her research was completed under the mentorship of Dr. Shikui Chen of Stony Brook University.

Wu’s poster on her original research is entitled “Crossmodal Morphological Plasticity due to Sensory Deprivation in Auditory and Visual Cortex.” It was completed under the mentorship of Dr. Heykyoung Lee and Gabriela Rodriguez of Johns Hopkins University.

Wessel expresses her gratitude and comments on her JSHS experience, “I am really thankful that the Blair Magnet encouraged me to do this research project and helped me to learn the skills that allowed me to succeed in this competition. I really enjoyed talking about the research I did and what I learned, and I can’t wait to share it again with new people in Dayton.”

Gu graciously comments on her experience, “Although my research project on energy harvesters only lasted seven weeks, the Blair Magnet program has pulled me into the areas of STEM that I can now use to apply to real life situations.”



Montgomery Blair Magnet senior Amanda Wessel was awarded second place at the JSHS Greater Washington, D.C. Regional Competition and will advance to compete at the National JSHS to be held in April in Dayton, Ohio. (Photo courtesy of Ms. Lois Wessel)

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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