



Board of
Directors:

Ted Jou
President
Eileen Steinkraus
Vice-President
Sharon Goodall
Secretary
Dan Shepherdson
Treasurer
Ralph Bunday
Member
Sherrie Emoto
Member
Lola Piper
Member
Emily Yanisko
Member
Beth Kaufman
General Counsel

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 27, 2012

CONTACT: Sherrie Emoto, board@mbhsmagnet.org

**Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Student
Honored as Regional Finalist and Eight Others as
Semifinalists in Prestigious Siemens Competition**

Silver Spring, MD—Neil Davey of Gaithersburg, a Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program Junior, was named as a Regional Finalist, and eight Blair Magnet Seniors were awarded the status of Semifinalist in the 2012-13 Siemens Competition in Math, Science, and Technology on October 19. This prestigious annual award recognizes remarkable research by high school students nationally in the fields of math, science, and technology. As a Regional Finalist, Davey was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship and will compete for the title of Regional Winner at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on November 2-3. Siemens acknowledges Semifinalists with a school banner and a gift package. The competition is sponsored by the Siemens Foundation and administered by the College Board.

The Blair Magnet Siemens honorees are as follows:

Regional Finalist—Neil Davey of Gaithersburg
Semifinalists—Samir Durvasula, Elizabeth Liu, Junsheng Ma, Ashley Yuen, and Samuel Zbarsky of Rockville, Danting Liu of Gaithersburg, Charlie Pasternak of Bethesda, and Jinhie Skarda of Kensington.

Neil Davey's research, "Deletion of Endonuclease G Disrupts Mitochondrial Homeostasis and Leads to Reduced Virulence in the Human Protozoan Parasite *Leishmania mexicana*" was completed under Dr. Sreenivas Gannavaram of the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research at the Food and Drug Administration. Davey acknowledges the Blair Magnet, "I am honored to be named a Regional Finalist in the Siemens Competition for my project that was aimed at creating a vaccine candidate for the parasitic disease Leishmaniasis. I am especially grateful to the Blair Magnet Program, which has given me the knowledge and opportunity to be able to work in a lab over the summer, where I conducted my research."

Jinhie Skarda worked under Dr. Tracy Clarke of the Naval Research Laboratory to complete her research, "Analysis of Jovian Decametric

Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation Inc.

Emission using the Long Wavelength Array Station 1.” Skarda explains, “This summer was such a valuable experience because I learned how to work around dead ends and unexpected problems that are a natural part of research. As I wrote my report for the Siemens competition, I found myself surprised and pleased with how much I was able to accomplish and am very grateful to the Blair Magnet Program for encouraging me to go out and find a summer internship!”



Neil Davey, Montgomery Blair Magnet Junior and 2012 Siemens Competition Regional Finalist



Jinhie Skarka, Montgomery Blair Magnet Senior and 2012 Siemens Competition Semifinalist

Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation Inc.

This fall 2,255 students entered this premier national contest, submitting 1,504 projects. Besides the eight Blair Magnet Semifinalists, only five other Semifinalists hail from Maryland, all but two from the Montgomery County Public School system. Davey is one of only two Regional Finalists from the state.

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.

###
