



Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation Inc.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Students Advance in U.S. Chemistry Team Competition

Silver Spring, MD—Alexander Bourzutschky and Catherine Xue of Potomac, a senior and a junior, respectively, in the Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program, qualified for the U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad National Exam through their performances on the local level Chemistry Olympiad exam last month. This contest, sponsored by the American Chemical Society, is designed to stimulate and promote achievement in high school chemistry.

About 10,000 high school students nationally participated in the initial phase of testing at the local level last month. Based on results of this first test, Bourzutschky and Xue were selected as the two students Blair was allowed to send to participate in the next (semifinal) level of competition, the national exam. This is a 4.5-hour, three-part exam consisting of a multiple-choice section, a problem-solving section, and a lab practical. The top twenty scorers on this national exam are invited to a two-week study camp where they try to earn one of four spots on the U.S. Chemistry Team, which will travel to the 46th International Chemistry Olympiad to be held on July 20-29 in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Bourzutschky credits Blair Magnet chemistry and physics teacher and longtime Blair chemistry team sponsor, Mr. Tran Pham, “The upper-level chemistry courses at Blair taught by Mr. Pham cover the AP curriculum and beyond, and they definitely helped me make it past the local exam level this year and last.” In fact, Bourzutschky received High Honors last year on the U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad National Exam, which is presented to the top 50 scorers on this test.

Xue agrees, “I really appreciate that the Blair Magnet provides rigorous science curricula to prepare us for these competitions and am grateful to its very supportive teachers, particularly Mr. Pham. Without his help and encouragement over the years, I would not be able to have reached this far in the Chemistry Olympiad competition.”

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Alex Bourzutschky (above) and Catherine Xue (below) were named as semifinalists for the 2014 U.S. Chemistry Team. (Photos courtesy of Alex Bourzutschky and Ms. Merry Zhong, respectively.)

About The Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation

This organization was founded by a group of concerned students, teachers, administrators, parents, 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

Keeping a Special Program Special
www.mbhsmagnet.org

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at large. The Foundation is incorporated in the state of Maryland and is 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

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