



MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL MAGNET
FOUNDATION INC.



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**Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Students
Earn Fifth Place at National Science Bowl**

Silver Spring, MD—A team of five Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program students earned fifth place and an award of \$1,500 for the Blair Science Department at the 2015 National Science Bowl, which was held at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center in Chevy Chase, MD and the Lisner Auditorium in Washington, D.C. on April 30-May 4. Members of the team (with their grade level) include Michael Winer (12), team captain, of North Bethesda; Matthew Das Sarma (12) and Arnold Mong (11) of Potomac; and Bendeguz Offertaler (12) and Eric Lu (11) of Rockville. Since the inception of the contest in 1991, Blair's team has ranked in the top five teams multiple times and even won first place nationally in 1999, second place as recently as 2011, and fifth place last year. Blair magnet math, science, and computer science teacher, Mr. Tran Pham, has served as the team's longtime coach.

This national competition, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), tests students' knowledge in all areas of science. This year over 9,500 students competed for a spot at the national contest, attending their regional competition first. After this initial round, only 68 high school teams were invited to the National Science Bowl. Each team was comprised of four members, an alternate, and a coach. With a format similar to the game show *Jeopardy*, the goal of this competition is to encourage high school students to excel in science and math and to pursue careers in these fields.

Team member Matthew Das Sarma reflects on his experience at the science bowl, "As a tremendous finale to my high school academic competition experience, National Science Bowl served as a great test of my science knowledge and also gave me the opportunity to interact with the engaging and enjoyable personalities of some of the nation's smartest high school students. It would not have been possible to earn fifth place out of the 68 teams that qualified for this national competition without the serious dedication of my fellow team members. We are proud to have won matches against such strong teams."

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The Montgomery Blair team earned fifth place at the 2015 National Science Bowl with members (from left): Coach Tran Pham, Michael Winer (team captain), Matthew Das Sarma, Arnold Mong, Bendeguz Offertaler, and Eric Lu. (Photo courtesy of National Science Bowl)

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

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