



Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation Inc.



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Team of Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Students Place First and Win \$20,000 Scholarship in Applied Math Competition

Silver Spring, MD—On April 28 a team of four Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program students was selected as the first place team in the 2010 Moody's Mega Math Challenge at the Moody's Foundation headquarters in New York City. Along with this honor, the team was awarded a \$20,000 scholarship. This contest is sponsored by the Moody's Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting a variety of educational programs, and is organized by the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics.

For this year's competition, 2,409 high school juniors and seniors from 18 eastern states, forming 531 teams, spent up to 14 hours at the beginning of March evaluating U.S. Census Bureau figures and methods in order to make recommendations for undercount adjustment, redistricting of Congressional seats, and reapportioning of the U.S. House of Representatives. The topic was made known to the teams only when testing began, at which time the contestants researched the issue, created mathematical models, and composed a written summary of their findings. After over 1,000 hours of judging by over 60 Ph.D.-level applied mathematicians, 43 teams were selected for scholarships beginning at \$1,000 based on their summaries. The top six of these teams were invited to present their results to a panel of judges at the Moody Foundation, at which time the Blair team was judged to be the winner. They used probabilistic models, statistical tests, computer simulations, and philosophical arguments in their presentation.

Jacob Hurwitz, David Tolnay, and Scott Yu of Rockville and Andrew Das Sarma of Potomac comprise this Blair team. Blair Magnet teacher David Stein serves as their coach and helped them polish their research and prepare their presentation.

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

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Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation Inc.

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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Photographs courtesy of Brad Hamilton

Top photograph—Montgomery Blair team members, (from left) Scott Yu, Andrew Das Sarma, David Tolnay, and Jacob Hurwitz, with team coach David Stein

Bottom photograph—Montgomery Blair team members, (from left) Scott Yu, Andrew Das Sarma, Jacob Hurwitz, and David Tolnay.