



Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation Inc.



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Teams of Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Students Take First and Third Place at Envirothon Competition

Silver Spring, MD—A team of five Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program students was selected as the first place team and another as the third place team in the 2011 Montgomery Envirothon Competition held at the county's Agricultural History Farm Park last month. Members on the first place team include Enoch Hsiao (captain), Andrew Lu, Nina Jessica Lu, and Nathan Ng of Rockville and Siddhant Nanda of Gaithersburg. The third place team members were Sharon Chen (captain) and Kiran Matharu of Potomac, Vivienne Chen and Tatyana Gubin of Gaithersburg, and Lisha Ruan of Rockville. Blair's first place team will represent Montgomery County at the Maryland Envirothon Competition, to be held June 15-16 at St. Mary's College in St. Mary's City, MD. In last year's competition, Blair's team captured second place statewide. In fact, in the 21-year history of the state competition, Blair has sent first and second place teams and has even placed among the top five teams nationally.

To prepare for the Envirothon competition, students study the state's natural resources, learning to identify and categorize plants and animals, perform soil surveys, estimate wood yield from tress, and solve natural resource issues. Professionals in the fields of soil science, wildlife management, forestry, and environmental engineering volunteer to instruct the students. Each year there is a special focus environmental issue, as well, with this year's topic concerning salt and fresh water estuaries. The winner of the state competition will represent Maryland at the Canon Envirothon Competition July 24-29 in New Brunswick, Canada, where over 300 students from the United States and Canada will compete for over \$40,000 in scholarships and prizes.

Blair magnet math and science teacher, Mr. Tran Pham, has served as coach of the school's Envirothon teams for the past 18 years. This year 16 Blair teams participated in the Envirothon competition, with Pham coaching all of them. Pham praises the Blair teams, "Even though we do not emphasize the application of math and science in environmental issues, our students show their concerns about the environment and

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want to learn, and that is why I coach the Envirothon teams. These students work together as a team to be the winners, demonstrating true cooperative learning.”

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 a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

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