



Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation Inc.



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Students  
Place in U.S. Physics Bowl Competition**

**Silver Spring, MD**—Andrew Das Sarma of Potomac, a senior in the Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program, earned first place in Division 2 competition (for second-year physics students) in the 2011 U.S. Physics Bowl Competition last month. In addition, sophomore Samuel Zbarsky of Rockville and freshman Alexander Bourzutschky of Potomac took 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> place, respectively, in Division 1 competition (for first-year physics students). The Blair Division 1 team also placed 5<sup>th</sup> contest-wide, while the Blair Division 2 team ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> among all magnet schools in the competition. Das Sarma's top place marks the first time that a Montgomery Blair student has earned first place in Division 2 international competition.

In April over 4,000 students from more than 200 high schools in the United States, Canada, China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea took this test, which is run by the American Association of Physics Teachers. The timed, multiple-choice test covered topics and concepts covered in a typical high school physics course. Students competed in either Division I, for first-year physics students, or Division 2, for second-year physics students. In addition, schools are divided into 15 geographic regions. School team scores represent the sum of the top five scores for that school.

Das Sarma comments on his first place win, "I wasn't expecting to do very well on Physics Bowl, considering that it had been a long time since I'd worked on many of the topics that it covers. I was absolutely shocked to see my name at the top of the list. I was also thrilled to see that Blair broadly continued its tradition of excellence on Physics Bowl, with Sam Zbarsky and Alex Bourzutschky placing among the top ten nationally." Indeed, last year Diwakaran Ilangoan of Gaithersburg and Zbarsky were the highest scoring Division 1 students in this region. Also, Das Sarma and then Blair Magnet senior, Anand Oza, had the highest Division 2 scores regionally. These scores contributed to Montgomery Blair being the top scoring Division 2 school and the 2<sup>nd</sup> place Division 1 school regionally in 2010. Mr. James Schafer, Blair Magnet physics and mathematics teacher, serves

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as staff sponsor for the Physics Bowl team.

## **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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