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Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Students Place at Princeton University Math Competition

Silver Spring, MD—Two teams of Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program students, each with eight members, participated in the Princeton University Math Competition (PUMaC) on November 19 in Princeton, NJ. This annual event is an international math competition that is open to all high school students, accepting the first 560 applicants. The competition consists of a power round (difficult questions requiring an hour or two of creative thinking), individual rounds, a team round, and individual finals. Both an A and a B division of competition are available, with the A division meant for more experienced teams.

Montgomery Blair Magnet A team members included Brandon Berger, Eric Neyman, and Sam Zbarsky of Rockville, Andy Gilbert, Andrew Hu, and Jason Hyun of Silver Spring, Viju Ilangovan of Gaithersburg, and Gabriella Studt. B team participants were Alex Bourzutschky of Potomac, Kevin Chiang and Bob Ma of Gaithersburg, Andrew Lu, Jessica Lu, Thomas McHale, and Michelle Noh of Rockville and Charlie Pasternak of Bethesda.

The Blair A team tied for first place in the team round and placed ninth in the power round and sixth overall. Individual team members were recognized for their performance on specific tests: Zbarsky took fourth place in Number Theory, Hu earned fifth place in Combinatorics, and Ilangovan scored eighth place in Combinatorics. The Blair B team ranked eighth overall, and team member Pasternak was awarded both fourth place in Combinatorics and ninth place in overall individual results.

Pasternak enjoyed participating in this competition, commenting, “One thing that was great about PUMaC was seeing kids who came from all over the country and the world to participate. It’s fun to meet up with kids we know but don’t normally get to see.” Ilangovan agrees, "Our team was filled with lots of smart kids, and I'm really impressed (but not surprised) with our team's successes…Even with all the tension, the competition was really fun. I definitely look forward to next year."

About The Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation

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