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**Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Teams
Take First and Second Place at Maryland Science Bowl**

Silver Spring, MD—Three teams from the Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program entered the Maryland Science Bowl, held on January 14 at the Montgomery College Rockville Campus, with two of the teams earning first and second place. The first-place team members are Avikar Periwal (team captain) and Alexander Bourzutschky of Potomac, Charlie Pasternak of Bethesda, Saurav Das and Alan Du of Gaithersburg. Members of the second-place team include Viju Ilangovan (team captain) of Gaithersburg, Jessica Lu and Sam Zbarsky of Rockville, Jason Hyun of Silver Spring, and Myles Wagner of Potomac. Amazingly, the first-place team is composed entirely of sophomores with one junior. A third team of all freshmen include team members Matthew Das Sarma (team captain) and Catherine Xue of Potomac, Rahul Bhale of Olney, Michael Winer and Victor Xu of Rockville.

The first two Blair Magnet teams went undefeated during the two round-robin rounds in the morning of competition. In the afternoon, these teams beat each of Walter Johnson High School and Centennial High School. The final match of the day resulted in the first and second place titles for these teams. The freshman team defeated two teams from Richard Montgomery High School and Thomas S. Wootton High School before losing to their fellow Blair teammates. Blair's first-place team will compete at the U.S. Department of Energy National Science Bowl to be held at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center in Chevy Chase, MD on April 26-30. The team was awarded an expense-paid trip to this competition, as well as individual medals. Last year the Blair Magnet team took second place at the national competition. Blair Magnet teacher, Mr. Tran Pham, has long served as coach for the Blair science bowl teams.

First-place team member Charlie Pasternak comments on the competition, "It was an exciting day and a great competition. The program and faculty of the Blair Magnet Program do a fantastic job giving us a great foundation and thanks to Mr. Pham for sponsoring and working with the teams." Team captain Avikar Periwal agrees, "The Blair Magnet has great teachers who really teach us, and that is why Blair as a school was able to do well at the competition."

Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation Inc.



The Montgomery Blair Magnet first-place Maryland Science Bowl team with Dr. Eun-Woo Chang, Instructional Dean of Science, Engineering, and Mathematics at Montgomery College on far left (from left): Alan Du, Saurav Das, Alex Bourzutschky, Avikar Periwal, Charlie Pasternak, and Coach Tran Pham. (Photo courtesy of Marli Pasternak)

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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