

Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Program Newsletter

58 Blair Students Eligible for National Merit and National Achievement Scholarships

Fifty-three out of the 149 National Merit and five out of the fourteen National Achievement Semifinalists from Montgomery County Public Schools attend Montgomery Blair High School. The Semifinalists are able to compete for National Merit/Achievement Scholarships and other corporate and university sponsored scholarships. During a recognition ceremony on September 16 at Blair, Students who were named semifinalists received an information packet on how to apply for these scholarships.

An additional 62 students were named Commended Students for scoring above the national index scores but not the state index.

National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists

Bae, Alexander	Ko, Pin-Joe	Puttagunta, Rohan
Carlson, Stephen	Lai, Victoria	Qiao, Peter L.
Chellappa, Deepa	Lee, Timothy	Qiu, Xinhong
Chen, Wenjing	Li, Yifan	Shaya, Benjamin
Cho, Lawrence	Lin, Elaine	Shen, Michelle
Choi, Angela	Lin, Haozhi	Shiau, Elissa
Cohen, Michael	Liu, Amy	Sui, Xinyi
Curley, Roger	Liu, Siqing	Tao, David
Deng, Sophia	Ma, Li	Teitelbaum, Claire
Detzner, Adam	Metcalf, Meredith	Tolnay, David
Fallick, Jeremy	Mittal, Urja	Tousley, Jeremy
Higgins, Richard	Molina, Nils	Wang, Jennifer
Hurwitz, Jacob	Muskin-Pierret, Joel	Xiao, Yi
Hyder, Andrew	Ng, Andrea	Yu, Scott
Jia, Lena	Novello, Rebecca	Zhang, Chenmuren
Jing, Diana	Owen, Joseph	Zhang, Devin
Jones, Emily	Oza, Anand	Zimmermann, Scott
Kannan, Matthew	Pitt, Caroline	

National Achievement Scholarship Semifinalists

Elfalim Alemu	Alex Kapiamba	Jasmine Sarjeant
Redab Alnifaidy	Kamal Ndousse	

Changes

Magnet Coordinator

Over the summer, Mr. Heidler accepted a position as Assistant Principal at Lucy Barnsley Elementary School. On September 8, Peter Ostrander was appointed as the new Magnet Coordinator. Mr. Ostrander comes to Blair after serving three years as a Secondary Program Supervisor with the Division of Accelerated and Enriched Instruction (AEI), the office that supports magnet programs in MCPS. Mr. Ostrander also served as the first Magnet Coordinator of the Roberto Clemente Middle School Magnet Program from 2003-2006 and taught Computer

Science in the magnet program at Takoma Park Middle School.

Magnet Secretary

Ms. Berardi has taken the position of Registrar in the counseling office at Blair. Interviews for a new magnet secretary have been held. The new secretary will most likely be in place by October 19.

Parent Communication

Magnet staff will continue to communicate with parents through Edline regarding student assignments and grades. Additionally, a newsletter highlighting student achievements and upcoming

events will be sent home each month. The newsletter will include important information regarding the magnet, upcoming events and dates, as well as recognition for student accomplishments.

Parent coffees will be held a few times each year. Each parent coffee will have an area of focus for discussion. Parents will also have the time to talk informally with Blair staff. Look for the first coffee towards the middle of November. If there are parents that would like to help organize these coffees, please contact the magnet office at (301) 649-8240.

Special Dates of Interest:

- October 2—Half Day, Interims Distributed
- October 2—Applications for middle and high school magnet programs available
- October 5—Biology HSA
- October 7—NSL HSA
- October 8—English HSA
- October 14—College Readiness Tests
- October 16—No School for Students
- October 16-17—Blair 75th anniversary Weekend
- October 30—First Marking Period Ends

Choice forms and magnet applications are due November 9



"Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan, 'press on' has solved, and always will solve, the problems of the human race."

- Calvin Coolidge

Magnet Application and Choice Season Opens

Applications for secondary magnet programs in Montgomery County Public schools are available on-line and in schools beginning October 2. Current 8th grade students interested in applying to the magnet programs at Blair, Richard Montgomery and Poolesville high schools as well as current 5th grade students interested in applying to the magnet programs at Takoma Park, Eastern and Clemente middle schools need to complete the applications by November 9.

Each program will have an informational meeting for parents and students. These meetings will be held at 7:00 pm at their respective schools. Included to the right are meeting dates for programs available to students living the lower portion of the county. For more information about all county programs, par-

ents and students can visit the MCPS web site at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/specialprograms/.

All of the programs listed require students to complete an application and provide teacher recommendations. With the exception of the Kennedy High School program, all students applying must also take an exam on December 5. Information on the exam is provided in the application packet.

Current 8th graders living in the Downcounty or Northeast Consortia must complete a choice form by November 9. Information about options can also be found on the MCPS web site at www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/schoolchoice/.

- October 9: Eastern Middle School Humanities and Communication Magnet Program
- October 12: Poolesville High School Global Ecology Program
- October 21: Takoma Park Middle School Math, Science and Computer Science Magnet Program
- October 22: Montgomery Blair High School Science, Math and Computer Science Magnet Program
- October 26: Richard Montgomery High School International Baccalaureate Program
- October 27: Montgomery Blair High School Communication Arts Program
- November 18: John F. Kennedy High School Leadership Training Institute

Four Blair Alumni Selected as Philip Merrill Presidential Scholars

Each year, The Merrill Presidential Scholars Program honors the University of Maryland's most successful seniors. Additionally, the program recognizes educators identified by the award winners as instrumental in their education. This year, four of the award winners are 2006 graduates of Montgomery Blair High School, including three graduates of the magnet program.

John Silberholz (Blair '06) was named a scholar from the Robert H. Smith School of Business. John recognized Ms. Mary Ann Dvorsky as an educator who provided inspiration and mentor-

ship. In his statement as to why he selected Ms. Dvorsky, John wrote, "She encouraged me to delve deeper into school assignments that I found interesting instead of just finishing them and moving on, a practice that continues to pay dividends."

Sarah Peitzmeier ('06), receiving the award from the College of Chemical and Life Sciences, credits former Blair teacher Dr. Patricia Miller for her mentorship. "A casual comment of hers - 'You know, you would make a great scientist' - opened a door in my mind and led me to where I am today."

Rachel Kirsch ('06) identified her

fifth grade teacher, Ms. Judy Shapiro, for encouraging her interest in mathematics. Rachel is receiving the award from the College of Computer, Mathematical and Physical Sciences.

Also receiving the award was Blair CAP graduate, Kamilia Butler-Peres ('06), who recognized former CAP teacher and coordinator, Mr. John Goldman, for his commitment to education.

The award winners and selected educators will be recognized at a luncheon on October 23. Additionally, a scholarship of \$1000 in each educator's name will be awarded to a student in MCPS.

2009 MacArthur Fellows Include Blair Alumnus



Maneesh Agrawala, Blair Class of 1990

Maneesh Agrawala ('90) was recently announced as a 2009 MacArthur Fellow. Maneesh is currently an Associate Professor at UC Berkeley in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science. His work's focus is the design of visual interfaces that enhance our ability to understand large quantities of information.

After graduating from Blair, Maneesh earned a B.S. and Ph.D. from Stanford University. He

was affiliated with Microsoft Research prior to joining the faculty at UC Berkeley.

As part of the award, Maneesh earned a \$500,000 grant for future research over the next five years. More information about the MacArthur Awards can be found at www.macfound.org. A video of Maneesh explaining some of his work can be found on UC Berkeley's web site at www.berkeley.edu.

Magnet Foundation

Last year, a group of former teachers, parents, and alumni founded a non-profit organization to support the Magnet Program. The Blair Magnet Foundation is a public charity that raises money for student clubs and activities and works to help the Magnet in other ways. To learn more about the Foundation, please visit the website at www.mbhsmagnet.org. The Foundation also distributes a quarterly newsletter, which you can read online:

www.mbhsmagnet.org/news/fall09/.

FIST

Each year, the Magnet Program and Science Department sponsor a Females In Science and Technology conference (FIST) for 7th grade students in Montgomery County. This year's conference will be held on November 7. The conference is currently looking for student volunteers to assist with the event. Interested students can contact Ms. Dieckman. Informational meetings for volunteers will be held on October 8 at 2:15 and 3:00 in room 329.

Math Help at Lunch

Math help is available during both lunch periods for students. Students can go to room 325 during 5A lunch or rooms 317 and 346 during 5B lunch for assistance. Students can contact their individual teachers for times when additional help may be offered.

"On the mountains of truth you can never climb in vain: either you will reach a point higher up today, or you will be training your powers so that you will be able to climb higher tomorrow."

- Friedrich Nietzsche

Yau High School Mathematics Award (YHMA)

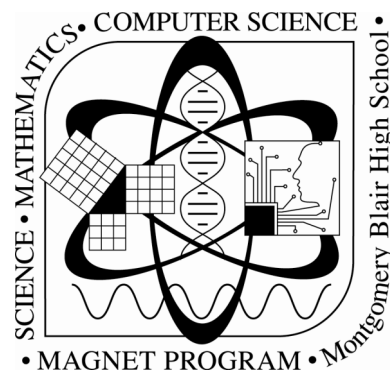
Jacob Hurwitz ('10) was selected as an individual semi-finalist and Rohan Puttagunta ('10), Nils Molina ('10) and Anand Oza ('10) were selected as semi-finalists with a group project in the Yau Student Competition. These students have been invited to Los Angeles to present their information on October 17, 2009. From there, they may be se-

lected as finalists to go on and compete in China.

The purpose of the YHMA is to encourage and acknowledge students and institutions for developing projects in mathematics. The organization looks for a strength in foundational mathematics as well as creativity in addressing current problems by means of mathematical

tools. More information about the YHMA can be found at www.yau-awards.org/overseas.

Recognizing that education is a personal and individual experience which depends on the unique talents and interests of each person, the mission of the Blair Magnet Program is to provide an environment in which each person's education is maximized by emphasizing the interrelationships among the disciplines, by developing a repertoire of problem-solving techniques and by pursuing both independent and collaborative research models.



Blair to Celebrate 75th Anniversary

On October 16 & 17, a celebration will occur to honor Montgomery Blair High School's 75th Anniversary. There are many events planned during this weekend. Below is a list of highlights. For more details and events go to www.blairalumni.org.

October 16

- Golf Tournament
- All Class Reunion

October 17

- Homecoming Parade
- Open House
- Blair — BCC Football Game
- Block Party

Blair Math Team Wins First Two Meets

A group of enthusiastic magnet students rushes out of their 8th period classes. Are they deviously skipping class? Nope. These students are on their way to biweekly math meets. At every meet, students from several schools gather at high schools across the county to polish their math skills and expand their knowledge in math. Students take part in either of two types of competition - an individual round or a team round. As the pencils scribble away, some problems are easily mastered while others present new predicaments. After time is called, chatter fills the air as eager students compare answers and share solutions to the problems. In this rich melting pot of discussion, everybody is a winner and

leaves with the greatest prize of all - knowledge.

Science, Mathematics and Computer Science Magnet Program

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