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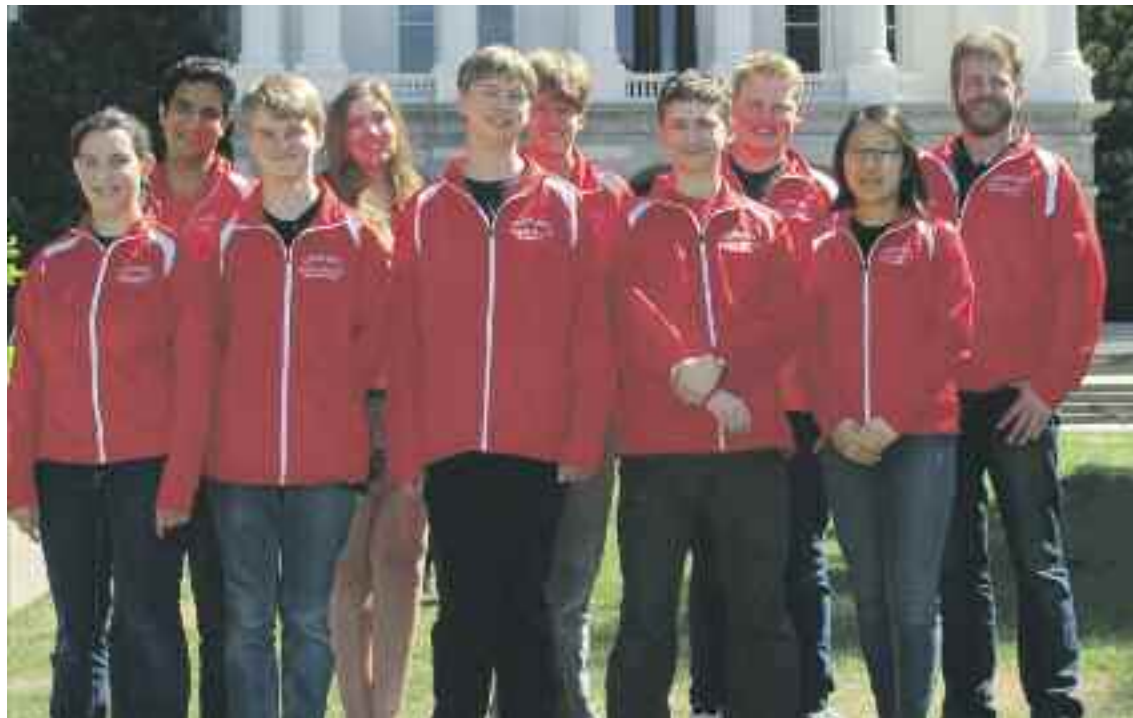
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Campolindo Returns as Champions in the National Academic Decathlon

Submitted by Jonathan Lance



Campolindo's Academic Decathlon team, from left: Uma Gaffney, Vikram Bhaduri, Christoph Steefel, Sarada Symonds, Graham Wade, Zach Scherer, Tristan Caro, Samuel MacAdam, Marina Han, and Coach Paul Verbanszky. Photo provided

For the second year in a row, Campolindo High School's Academic Decathlon team, representing the entire state of California, recently earned National Champion status for medium-sized schools.

"When I found out we won Nationals for the second year in a row, I was incredibly excited," says Campolindo's Academic Decathlon coach Paul Verbanszky, who teaches AP psychology and government/economics, and has been Campolindo's Academic Decathlon coach since 2005. "The team has worked very hard to accomplish this. An opportunity like this does not come often in a lifetime. These are some of the finest students I have ever worked with in my 13 years of education!"

Although Campolindo is a medium sized school, it placed 10th overall at the 2014 State Competition, held in Sacramento this past March, competing against schools several times its size (see the March 26 Lamorinda Weekly story at <https://www.lamorindaweekly.com/archive/issue0802/Campo-Finishes-on-Top-at-California-State-Academic-Decathlon.html>). U.S. Congressman George Miller came to the Campolindo campus last week to present the team with Congressional Recognition.

"I am really proud of how far our school's Academic Decathlon has come in the three years I have been in it, and how successful it has become," says Campolindo Academic Decathlon member Christoph Steefel.

Team member Graham Wade added, "I did not believe it at first, but I was really excited and happy that all of our hard work had paid off."

Directed by the Contra Costa County Office of Education and with the assistance of community volunteers, the East Bay Regional Academic Decathlon provides an opportunity for high school students to compete as individuals and teams in a series of 10 academic tests and demonstrations. The curriculum includes art, economics, language and literature, mathematics, music, science, social science, essay, interview, speech (prepared and impromptu), and the Super Quiz™.

10-Year-Old Del Rey Student Qualifies for Chess Championships

Submitted by Kaimi Niemann



Hans Niemann

Photo provided

Del Rey Elementary School student Hans Niemann, age 10, has qualified to play in the World Youth Chess Championships in Durban South Africa. He was the youngest winner of a recent Mechanics Institute Chess Club tournament in its 159 year history.

A letter from the United States Chess Federation arrived at Hans' door April 22 informing him that he qualified to play in the 2014 World Youth Chess Championships in the Open Under 12 Section. "Should you accept this invitation," wrote Jerry

Nash, USCF special projects and national education consultant, "you will have the opportunity to compete as a member of an elite team of players and coaches who will represent the United States in Durban, South Africa, from September 18-30."

The letter went on to congratulate Hans as one of the top rated players in his age group in the United States. "You can be proud of the results of your hard work. You are certainly to be congratulated for this milestone in your life."

Bookmark Contest Draws Hundreds of Entries

Submitted by Mary Ransdell



Back row, from left: Gavin Jones, Owen Gonzales, Felix Varnai; Kristi Conner and Hayden van Steyn; front row: Chaya Tong, Ella Thomason, Leela Anzenberger and Declan Henderson

Photo provided

Nearly 450 Lafayette students participated in the annual Friends of the Lafayette Library and Learning Center's Bookmark Contest. The Awards Ceremony took place at the Lafayette Library on April 30. Each first-time winner received a \$25 gift certificate from the Storyteller and the "Hall of Fame" winners received a \$25 gift certificate from the Friends

Corner Book Shop. The Hall of Fame honors students who submit outstanding artwork and have won the contest previously. In addition, Anthony Ruiz of Fastframe in Lafayette, who also frames all the winners' artwork for display in the Library, will frame each student's bookmark free of charge. He has generously supported the Bookmark Contest for over 15 years.

Orinda Girls Head to Iowa for Odyssey of the Mind World Finals

Submitted by Frank Tse



From left, Julia Sato, Kaydee Tu, Madi Lehman, Sara Lehman, Shelby Tse, Penny Hopkin celebrate with their state championship trophy. Photo Stephanie Yee

Thanks to winning performances at the state and district competitions, a team of Orinda Intermediate School sixth graders will travel to Iowa State University for the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals. Over 800 teams are expected at the World Finals at the end of May. The Odyssey of the Mind program is the world's largest international creative problem-solving competition. "OM" teams spend months creating their creative solution to a selected long-term problem, which is then presented and graded at district-level and state-level contests.

The OIS team presented a hilarious skit about famous paintings and statutes that come to life. The team includes Penny Hopkin as Athena, Madi Lehman as Mona Lisa, Sara Lehman as Venus de Milo, Julia Sato as the Girl with a Pearl Earring, Shelby Tse as barmaid in Manet's Bar at the Folies-Bergere, and KaydeeTu as Rodin's Thinker. Parents Stephanie Yee and Michelle Lehman coached the team.



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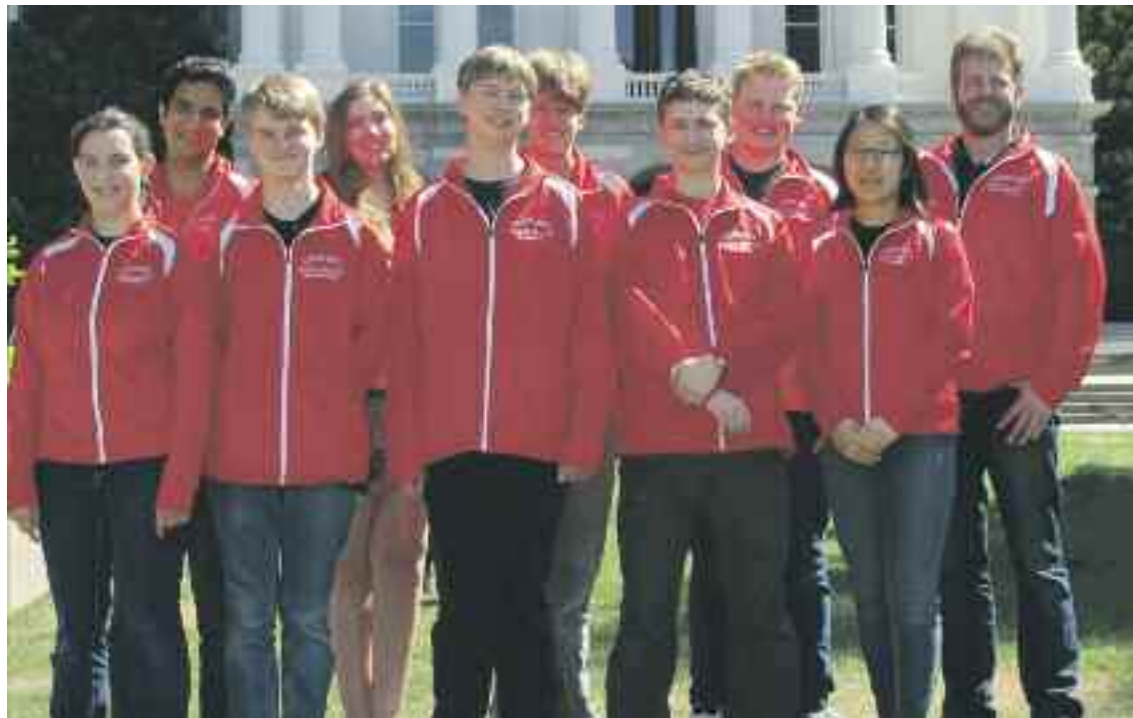
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