

Los Angeles Unified School District

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

333 S. Beaudry Ave., 1st floor

Los Angeles, CA 90017

Phone: (213) 241-6766

FAX: (213) 241-8952

www.lausd.net



News Release

March 20, 2006

#05/06-157

TAFT HIGH SCHOOL WINS CALIFORNIA ACADEMIC DECATHLON FINAL

Team Will Represent the State in the U.S. Competition Next Month in San Antonio, TX

Taft High School in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) has won the 2006 California Academic Decathlon Competition Finals, beating 54 other high school teams in the state. The nine-member team, with an overall high score of 50,912 points, will go on to represent California in the U.S. Academic Decathlon, scheduled April 26-29, in San Antonio, Texas.

Members of Taft High School's winning team are: Zachary Ellington, Michael Farrell, Farhan Khan, David Lopez, David Novgorodsky, Yuliya Rebrova, Atish Sawant, Dean Schaffer and Monica Schettler. Their coach is Arthur Berchin.

The victory was especially sweet for Taft High School. Last year, LAUSD powerhouse rival El Camino Real High School upset Taft, the 2005 LAUSD Academic Decathlon champion, by winning the state competition and capturing the 2005 U.S. Academic Decathlon championship. Taft High School has previously won four state championships and two national competitions.

LAUSD's El Camino Real High earned second place honors with an overall score of 49,448.9.

Some 55 high school teams from across California competed in the state competition, held March 17 and 18, in Los Angeles. The competition included an essay, a written Super Quiz, and tests in math, science, music, language and literature, economics and art. Speeches, interviews and a Super Quiz Relay were also part of the competition. Winners were announced Sunday, March 19, at the LAX Marriott Hotel.

Nine schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District competed in this year's state competition, eight invited as wild card teams. The schools made an impressive showing in this year's competition with 8 LAUSD schools placing among the top 10 scoring teams in

(more)

the contest. In addition, Los Angeles High School won the State “Super Quiz” Relay on Saturday at UCLA. The team scored 59 points out of 60 possible. Los Angeles High School has won the LAUSD’s Super Quiz competition nine consecutive times.

Members of L.A. High School’s team are: John De Toro, Tahsin Khan, Jairo Lopez, Dabin Oh, Jorge Revelo, Vanessa Romero, Geng Tan, Alina Trofimova and Vivian Yoon. Their coach is Jim Hatem.

“We want to congratulate all the students who competed in this year’s state competition,” said Cliff Ker, coordinator, Academic Decathlon for the LAUSD. “These are some amazing kids who are among the brightest high school scholars in the country. They have all worked hard and made sacrifices to compete at this level, and they are to be commended for their academic achievement.”

The following LAUSD students earned the highest score for their school: Dean Schaffer (Taft High School), Marianne O’Brien (El Camino Real High School), Alison Kim (Granada Hills Charter High School), Geng Tan (Los Angeles High School), Yulia Tolstova (Marshall High School), Ian Ynda-Hummel (Garfield High School), James Pellegren (North Hollywood), Matthew Richards (Reseda High School) and Tina Tong (Palisades Charter High School).

In the decathlon competition, each school team is comprised of nine students –three students from three different grade-point average (GPA) categories – Varsity (2.99 GPA and below), Scholastic (3.00-3.74 GPA) and Honor (3.74 GPA and above).

Top 10 Scoring Teams

- #1 Taft High School
- #2 El Camino Real High School
- #3 Moorpark High School (Ventura County)
- #4 Edison High School (Fresno County)
- #5 Granada Hills Charter High School
- #6 Los Angeles High School
- #7 Palisades Charter High School
- #8 North Hollywood High School
- #9 Marshall High School
- #10 Garfield High School

