



PRESS RELEASE

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Harmony School of Excellence Math Skills Excel at State Competition

AUSTIN— Exercising their brainpower to solve math and logic problems, 286 sixth, seventh and eighth grade students from around Texas participated in the 28th Annual Texas State MATHCOUNTS Competition on Saturday, March 26. Four of these Mathletes[®], and a teacher-coach, earned the chance to advance to 2011 Raytheon National MATHCOUNTS in Washington, D.C. in May where Texas will compete against the other 56 other teams from states and territories.

A team of four students from Harmony School of Excellence from Houston compiled the best score of 56 teams in the event held at the Hilton Austin Airport Hotel.

The Harmony School of Excellence students competing on Saturday were: Vincent Liu who placed 8th; Andrew Jin who placed 9th, Adam Abu-Shear placed 13th and Muaaz Ahmad placed 16th out of 286 competitors to take the slot as the #1 team in Texas. Their coach was teacher Isil Nal. Coach Nal will have the honor of coaching the Texas Team to compete at the National Competition in May.

For twenty-eight years, Texas has supported MATHCOUNTS—a national math coaching and competition program designed to increase enthusiasm and enhance achievement in middle school mathematics—because it fosters the highly advanced problem-solving and critical thinking skills that today’s students will need to become tomorrow’s leaders and innovators and help keep Texas competitive in an increasingly technology-driven economy.

The program—which is organized in Texas by the Texas Society of Professional Engineers (TSPE) and staffed by member volunteers—also demonstrates the power of cooperation between private practice and industry. 3M, Raytheon, Shell, the Sid W. Richardson Foundation, the Texas Education Agency, Texas Instruments, the University of Texas Cockrell School of Engineering and the University of Texas at Arlington College of Engineering support the program financially, , and speakers from Raytheon and Shell spoke regarding the need for a qualified workforce with strong math and science skills as well as how their math and science skills have helped them innovate and succeed in their careers.

ABOUT MATHCOUNTS:

MATHCOUNTS is a nationwide math enrichment, coaching and competition program directed to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students and their coaches, designed to increase enthusiasm for, and enhance achievement in, middle school mathematics throughout the United States. The program's success rests in great part on coaching sessions held at the school level. Texas is one step ahead of the game, as the only state to offer specific training in the use of the MATHCOUNTS materials for its coaches. Local chapter coordinators hold MATHCOUNTS Teacher Workshops throughout the year, typically in the fall before school competitions begin, that include tips and ideas for preparing students for competitions, as well as materials and ideas to improve problem-solving skills in their classrooms. Each year, the MATHCOUNTS Foundation creates the MATHCOUNTS School Handbook, which is distributed free of charge to middle schools across the country. Consisting of 300 creative math problems meeting National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) standards for grades 6-8, this handbook provides the basis for teachers and volunteers to coach student Mathletes on problem-solving and mathematical skills.

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PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST