Avalon School Earns State Champion Honors


State championship honors went to Avalon School in St. Paul with a score of 36,517.5. They will represent Minnesota at the United States Academic Decathlon Nationals in Bloomington, Minnesota, April 25–27. This is the first time their team has won state championship honors.

Second place went to Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial with a score of 34,203.1. They have earned a spot at the 2019 USAD Nationals in Division IV. Third place went St. Peter Blue with a score of 33,634.8. Nevis High School Team 1 earned fourth place with a score of 25,962.6.

At the state event, students received scores for speech, interview and Super Quiz™. The essay test and seven other objective tests were completed online earlier in February.

The event concluded with an awards luncheon, featuring guest speaker James Dimock, a communications studies professor at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Dimock highlighted the 2018–2019 curricular theme, The 1960s: A Transformational Decade with a keynote on social movements and civil disobedience in a democracy.

Six students performed in a judge-selected Speech Showcase. This year’s Speech Showcase presenters were Henry Dukart and Autumn Clayton King from Avalon School; Sophie Begnaud and Sam Germscheid from LCWM; Alesha Hellkamp from Nevis High School and Charles Redmond from St. Peter. Regional and state awards were presented for individual and team accomplishments and for the Super Quiz team champion, St. Peter Blue.

Participating high schools included Avalon School, Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial Secondary School, Nevis High School, Worthington High School and St. Peter High School. The third and fourth place teams have the opportunity to participate in the USAD Online Nationals.

As host to the 2019 USAD Nationals, we are looking for 250–300 volunteers to serve as interview and speech judges, timers, test proctors and student guides. Training will be provided. Please visit the USAD website at www.usad.org/volunteer for more information.

Academic Decathlon, the premiere national scholastic competition for high school students, was created to provide opportunities for students to experience the challenges of rigorous team and individual academic competition. Each student competes in 10 events: Art, Economics, Essay, Interview, Literature, Math, Music, Science, Social Science and Speech. Students also compete in Super Quiz, an oral quiz-show event that includes questions from six topic areas.

A unique aspect of Academic Decathlon is that it is designed to include students from all academic ability and achievement levels. Each nine-member team consists of three honor students (3.750–4.00 GPA), three scholastic students (3.00–3.749 GPA) and three varsity students (0.00–2.99 GPA). Each team member competes in all of the 10 events against other students in their individual divisions, and team scores are calculated using the top two individual scores from each division.

Gold, silver and bronze medals are awarded for individual events and overall scores. The broad base of awards allows for major recognition of academic accomplishment. For a complete list of individual and team winners, please visit the South Central Service Cooperative website www.mnscsc.org/decathlon.

A new theme of study is established every year with topics that are relevant, current and challenging. This year’s theme was The 1960s: A Transformational Decade. Next year’s topic will be announced March 1.

Interested in learning more about how to start a Minnesota Academic Decathlon team in your school? Please contact Joyce Swenson 507-389-5107. MNAD offers incentives for new teams, including free curriculum and waived team fees for the first year with a two-year commitment.

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