

COMMENDATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS
FEBRUARY 2015

High School

Congratulations to the following students who earned recognition for their writing in the Scholastic Writing Awards, hosted regionally by the University of Pittsburgh's Western PA Writing Project. Over 300 writing pieces from across the region were submitted. Students were mentored by Liz Cecelia, Tim Wagner, & Pat Palazzolo.

Silver Key Award

Poetry - Aditi Chattopadhyay

Short Story - Mahima Reddy

Flash Fiction - Mahima Reddy

Flash Fiction - Erin Graham

Honorable Mention

Short Story - Mahima Reddy

Short Story - Ben Nadler

Flash Fiction - Ben Nadler

Congratulations are extended to Kriti Shah, who is an affiliate award winner in the *National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) Aspirations in Computing*. Kriti is a freshman and was recommended for the award by her robotics coach. She is recognized for her computing-related aspirations and for her demonstrated, outstanding aptitude and interest in information technology/computing, solid leadership ability, good academic history, and plans for post-secondary education.

A team of Upper St. Clair High School students has been named Best in Nation in the 2014-2015 Verizon Innovative App Challenge. Congratulations to Michael Nastac, Christina Park, Gaurav Bhushan, Nymisha Rameswarapu, Akshay Prasad, and Vidhi Shah for creating the "A Look Inside" app, which satisfies the curiosity of the "natural engineer" in every child by providing elementary and middle school youngsters the opportunity to *virtually* explore the inner workings of common devices, from blenders to laptops. As a Best in Nation winner, Verizon will donate an additional \$15,000 Foundation Grant toward STEM education at Upper St. Clair High School. In addition, Verizon will award a Samsung Galaxy tablet for each student and their sponsor, in-person training from the MIT Master Trainers to turn the students' concept into a working app, and an all-expenses paid trip for each team member and one guardian to the National Technology Student Association Conference this summer in Dallas.

The team is sponsored by High School teacher Mrs. Pat Palazzolo.

Dmitry Wilding, high school senior, has been named the Parkway West CTC Student of the Month for December. Dmitry is a third year Welding student and a member of the National Technical Honor Society at Parkway West Career & Technical Center.

Congratulations are extended to the following Parkway West Career & Technical Center students that have been named to the Director's List of Honor Students for the second quarter of the 2014 – 2015 school year:

Ayisha Alexander – Health Asst. I
Hunter Edelmann – BCT
Mary Molitoris – Cosmetology II
Alyssa Perry – Health Asst. I
Aidan Vopal – BCT

On February 10, 2015 sixty-five USC students participated in the preliminary rounds of the Pittsburgh Public Theater's Shakespeare Scene & Monologue Contest. Over 1,100 students from the region were a part of the first round of competition, portraying characters from across Shakespeare's many works. Following the preliminary rounds, High School junior Ben Nadler and senior Sriparna Sen were invited to the Showcase of Finalists. After their performance as Lysander and Hermia from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the judges announced Ben and Sriparna the winners of the Pittsburgh Public Theater's 21st Annual Shakespeare Monologue & Scene Contest. Congratulations on this exceptionally high level of achievement in the arts.

Congratulations are extended to the following 2015 National Merit Finalists:

John B. Benhart
Ananya W. Cleetus
Dilanka T. Dharmasena
Rishabh Kewalramani
Madeline E. Kulp
Melissa Levine
Eliana M. Ondrejko
Tony Wang

On February 4th-6th, Upper St. Clair High School Orchestra members Mary Molitoris, Andrew Khor, and Alexis Scott were selected to participate in the PMEA District 1 Festival at Penn Hills High School. Following her audition on the viola, Mary Molitoris was also chosen for inclusion in the Western Region Orchestra Festival, which is held in early March.

Fort Couch/Boyce

Students from Boyce and Ft. Couch Middle Schools represented USC in this year's MathCounts Competition Series.

Congratulations to the Fort Couch team that took home 1st place at the competition. Braden Yates, Dina Leyzarovich, Jason Choi, and Sam Ding will continue on to the State Competition in Harrisburg at the end of March to compete against the top teams from each regional competition.

In addition, three students finished in the top-10 in the individual competition. Sixth grader, Jonah Murray, earned his seat in the Countdown Round in his first year at this competition. Braden Yates advanced his seat to 4th place and Sam Ding finished in 2nd place, earning themselves monetary prizes and a spot at the MathCounts State Competition in Harrisburg in March.

The Boyce National Geographic Geography Bee was held in January 2015. The students competed in various topics such as "Team Turf," "Weird But True!" and "World Comparisons." First place winner was sixth grader: Ishaan Shah. Coming in as the other top finalists were Christian Chiu, Bear Bottonari, Joseph Reeder, and Richa Mahajan.