



### Providing you with the latest information trending at OCAD.

#### **OCAD Mission Statement**

*To inspire academic excellence and build 21st century skills that prepares students for college and careers.*

#### **Alumni Words of Wisdom**

*"Few other extra-curricular activities have been as impactful and influential. Joining Academic Decathlon allowed me to refine my studying, writing, oratory, and self-discipline skills. I believe that exploring a theme through a breadth of disciplines is the epitome of a liberal arts education. I am a more well-rounded, educated person today, as a result of OCAD."*

**Bailey Adling, CSU Long Beach,  
Pacifica HS class of 2014**

For more information about the Orange County Academic Decathlon, please visit: [www.ocde.us/decathlon](http://www.ocde.us/decathlon)

#### **Newsletter Contact:**

Ron Segundo, Project Assistant  
Orange County Department of Education  
School and Community Services  
Phone: 714.966.4316  
E-mail: [rsegundo@ocde.us](mailto:rsegundo@ocde.us)

## Westminster leads a pack of five schools to CAD

Marking a first in the 47-year history of the Orange County Academic Decathlon, five Orange County schools have been selected to advance to next month's state decathlon in Sacramento.

Cheers rang out in a packed Orange Coast College auditorium the night of February 17 as perennial powerhouse Westminster High School was named the overall team winner with 50,981.8 points. Along with a special plaque, individual medals and local bragging rights, the school received a \$4,000 travel stipend from the Orange County Academic Decathlon Association, which joined OCDE in announcing this year's winners.

Westminster has burnished its reputation as an OCAD dynasty in recent years, taking first place in 2010, 2011, 2013 and now 2015. But as we said, it won't be the only Orange County school advancing to the next round.

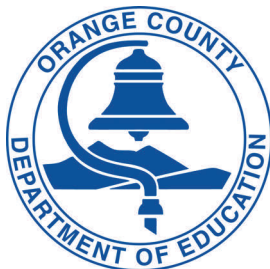
Woodbridge High in the Irvine Unified School District, Valencia High in the Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District, Trabuco Hills High in the Saddleback Valley Unified School District and La Quinta High in the Garden Grove Unified School District also earned their tickets to the California Academic Decathlon after posting some of the highest team scores in the state.

Here's a list of all of this year's winning Orange County teams by division:

### **DIVISION 1**

- 1st Place: *Westminster High School, Huntington Beach Union High School District*
- 2nd Place: *Woodbridge High School, Irvine Unified School District*
- 3rd Place: *Valencia High School, Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District*
- 4th Place: *Trabuco Hills High School, Saddleback Valley Unified School District*
- 5th Place: *La Quinta High School, Garden Grove Unified School District*

[results continued on page 2]



### **In This Issue**

- Westminster leads the a pack of five schools to CAD
- Peterson Scholar: - Divya Prajapati
- Hooper Scholar: - Leo Lagarde
- OCAD Volunteer and Donation Opportunities

**DIVISION 2**[continued from page 1: **Westminster leads pack of five schools to CAD**]

- 1st Place: *Servite High School, Private School, Anaheim*  
 2nd Place: *Sonora High School, Fullerton Joint Union High School District*  
 3rd Place: *Esperanza High School, Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District*  
 4th Place: *San Juan Hills High School, Capistrano Unified School District*  
 5th Place: *Fountain Valley High School, Huntington Beach Union High School District*

**DIVISION 3**

- 1st Place: *Canyon High School, Orange Unified School District*  
 2nd Place: *El Toro High School, Saddleback Valley Unified School District*  
 3rd Place: *Pacifica High School, Garden Grove Unified School District*  
 4th Place: *Sunny Hills High School, Fullerton Joint Union High School District*  
 5th Place: *San Clemente High School, Capistrano Unified School District*

For this complete article and more stories from the Orange County Department of Education, please visit the new OCDE Newsroom page at <http://newsroom.ocde.us>



The Westminster High School Academic Decathlon team proudly displays awards and \$4,000 travel stipend.

**Peterson Scholarship Recipient: Divya Prajapati**

Divya Prajapati, 2015 Peterson Scholarship Recipient

**Divya Prajapati**, a four-year participant on the Woodbridge High School Academic Decathlon team, is the epitome of a champion decathlete. She has served as the team captain for the last two years, exemplifying the qualities of academic excellence, leadership, diligence, and commitment to learning. She is also the perfect role model for her teammates, as she has a contagious enthusiasm for learning, always goes the extra mile to help others, and holds the spirit of team work in its highest regard. Divya has not just become one of the highest scoring decathletes in the county, she has become, as her coaches would describe, "The Ambassador" for Academic Decathlon.

Divya stated that she learned two important things from OCAD. First, she has become a stronger leader, noting, "Over the past four years, I've become more self-confident, motivated, empathetic, and diligent as captain." Second, OCAD has given her the passion for learning about all subjects. Divya says, "The unique part of OCAD is that you can only succeed if you embrace the curriculum and engage yourself in understanding, instead of simply memorizing. From experience, the only way that happens is if you're passionate about learning and committed to the competition."

Throughout her four years in Academic Decathlon, Divya has demonstrated continuous growth in all ten subjects. She has received a total of 31 individual medals, including four in the California Academic Decathlon competition last year.

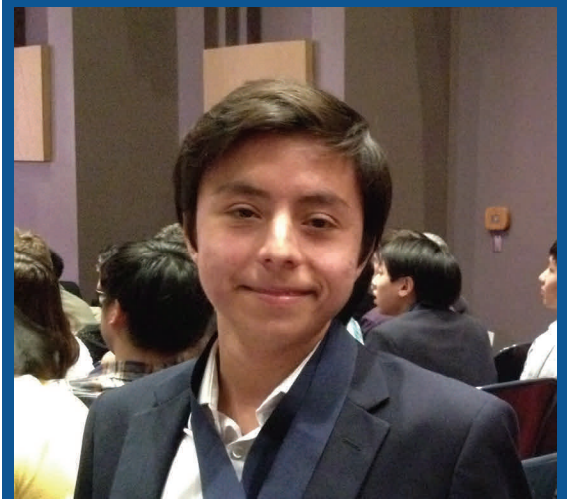
An excerpt from Divya's University of California personal statement sums up her experience with Academic Decathlon: "Even more importantly however, my 'aficion' [a word meaning 'true passion' in Spanish, and a word Divya learned through Academic Decathlon] constantly drives me to embrace the world's wealth of knowledge, to always open myself up with an optimistic and welcoming attitude, and to take on any new challenges. While I value my team's tangible achievements, the heavy medals and shiny trophies, my greatest achievement and pride in [Academic] Decathlon is my 'aficion,' as I will now forever love the essence of the competition itself: learning."

\*The OCAD Peterson Scholarship Award is presented annually to an overall outstanding decathlete who has demonstrated exceptional diligence and persistence as well as great concern for others – named for the founder of Academic Decathlon, Dr. Robert Peterson, former Orange County Superintendent of Schools. Honorees selected for this award exemplify what OCAD is all about.

## Hooper Scholarship Recipient: Leo Lagarde

**Leo Lagarde**, a two-year participant on the Magnolia High School Academic Decathlon team, is a true example of grit, determination, and dedication to education. His coaches describe his diligence and constant desire to improve himself, along with his intellectual curiosity and his unwavering kindness, as a few of the facets that have led to Leo's success and selection as a co-captain for the Academic Decathlon team. In the excerpts below, Leo expresses what Academic Decathlon has meant to him:

"I established a sense of self determination to commit to my school's Academic Decathlon team the summer after my sophomore year of high school. For two years prior, I had worked on improving my skills in water polo and swim, however I wanted to prove to my family, friends, and predominantly to myself, that I could achieve success on a team where physical capability was not the general point of attention. In the two years I've spent with Academic Decathlon, I obtained more than knowledge, friends and memories; I gained a second family.



Leo Lagarde, 2015 Hooper Scholarship Recipient

To me, being on the Academic Decathlon team was one of the greatest decisions I have made in my high school career because it has encouraged me to finally open my eyes and become the diligent individual that I am. My Decathlon coaches awarded me the honor of being co-captain of the whole team for this year, and in turn, I stepped up to the challenge and with deliberation on my decision. I, with confidence and exuberance, helped steer my team towards success. Without Academic Decathlon and the support of my team that came with it, I would not have been able to acknowledge that I had the capability of being a leader, and for that I am truly grateful."

With humility, kindness, enthusiasm, and dedication to improvement, Leo has never lost sight of his personal goals and his potential to succeed.

\*The OCAD Hooper Scholarship Award is presented annually to a decathlete who has shown improvement in several areas of the competition, and has demonstrated unusual diligence and persistence in and out of the Academic Decathlon program. The award is named in honor of former Trabuco Hills High School Coach, Janet Hooper, in recognition of her many years of dedicated service to her teams and to OCAD.

## Volunteers Needed at the State and National Competition

Are you interested in volunteering at the State and National competitions? The California Academic Decathlon (CAD) and the United States Academic Decathlon (USAD) are looking for community volunteers to serve as proctors and judges for their competition events. Please see information below to register as a volunteer.

### Upcoming CAD Volunteer Dates

Interview, Speech Judge, Test Proctor, or  
Super Quiz Proctor

March 20-21, 2015— Sacramento, CA

Register to volunteer at:

<http://www.academicdecathlon.org/volunteer/Default.htm>

### Upcoming USAD Volunteer Dates

Interview, Speech Judge, Test Proctor, or  
Super Quiz Proctor

April 16-17, 2015— Hyatt Regency, Garden Grove, CA

Register to volunteer at:

<http://www.tinyurl.com/usad15volunteer>

