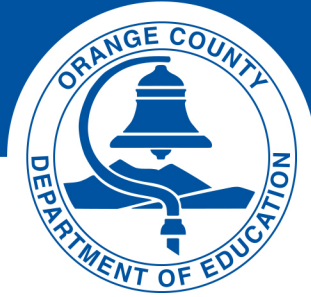


NEWS RELEASE

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High school teams prepare for 48th annual Orange County Academic Decathlon Two-day contest set to culminate with the action-packed Super Quiz Relay on Feb. 6

COSTA MESA, Calif., Jan. 27, 2016 – Over the next two Saturdays, more than 500 students from 43 local high schools will participate in the 48th annual Orange County Academic Decathlon (OCAD), which concludes with the rousing Super Quiz Relay on Feb. 6.

Schools will once again be competing for top honors – and an invitation to represent Orange County at the California Academic Decathlon in March.

Decathletes will kick off the communications portion of the competition on Saturday, Jan. 30 by presenting prepared and impromptu speeches, participating in personal interviews and writing essays at Tustin High School. Approximately 150 community volunteers will serve as speech and interview judges.

One week later, on Feb. 6, the decathletes will take 30-minute multiple-choice tests in the subject areas of art, literature, mathematics, music, science and social science. Each of these areas, with the exception of mathematics, will be based on the 2015-16 theme, “India.”

The second day of the competition will culminate with the Super Quiz Relay, a perennial crowd favorite that resembles a quiz show and sounds like a sporting event, with parents and classmates boisterously cheering on their favorite squads from the sidelines. The relay, which is open to the public, will begin at 2:30 p.m. in the Westminster High School gymnasium. The campus is located at 14325 Goldenwest St. in Westminster.

Founded in 1968 by former Orange County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Robert Peterson, Academic Decathlons are 10-event scholastic contests staged at the county, state and national levels.

Nine-member teams compete for the highest scores on multiple-choice exams, speeches, interviews and essay assignments. Each team must include three “Honor” students (those with GPAs of 3.75 or above), three “Scholastic” students (GPAs of 3.00 to 3.74) and three “Varsity” students (GPAs of 2.99 or below). Competitions culminate with the Super Quiz Relay, which is held in front of a live audience.

On average, Orange County decathletes report spending 20 to 25 hours a week preparing for the Academic Decathlon. About 10 of those hours involve working with coaches and teammates at afterschool meetings; the remaining practice time is spent studying alone or with teammates outside of school.

Along with logging long hours, teamwork plays a crucial role in each team's success. Students create tests and quizzes for one another, host scrimmages and analyze the prepared and impromptu speeches and interviews of their classmates. Students who are stronger at one academic subject often tutor and coach their teammates.

"Decathletes often refer to their decathlon team as their second family because of the countless hours spent together experiencing the rigors of competition," said Kristin Rigby, an OCDE program specialist of academic events. "The constant engagement in communication, along with the ability to collaborate with others, are important skills needed to succeed in the 21st century. For each Orange County team, the camaraderie and commitment towards achieving one common goal shines brightly."

This year's Orange County Academic Decathlon is supported by the generous donations of community members and made possible by sponsors including NuVision Federal Credit Union, C2 Education, Del Taco LLC, the Orange County Register, Learning.com, Teacher Created Materials and Aeries Software, Inc.

Top honors, medals and scholarships will be awarded at the OCAD Awards Ceremony at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 16 in the Bill Medley Auditorium at Santa Ana High School.

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