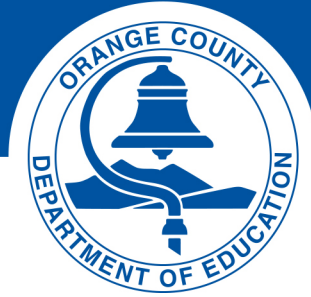


NEWS RELEASE

Al Mijares, Ph.D.
County Superintendent of Schools
200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626



Contact: Ian Hanigan
714-966-4008
communications@ocde.us

High school teams prepare for 49th annual Orange County Academic Decathlon Two-day competition to culminate with the fast-paced Super Quiz Relay on Feb. 4

COSTA MESA, Calif. – Forty-three local high schools will participate over two consecutive Saturdays in the 49th annual Orange County Academic Decathlon (OCAD), competing for top honors and an invitation to represent Orange County at the California Academic Decathlon.

Presented by the Orange County Academic Decathlon Association and the Orange County Department of Education, this year's decathlon is supported by the contributions of community members and sponsors, including NuVision Federal Credit Union, Del Taco LLC, the Orange County Register and Illuminate Education.

Decathletes will kick off the communications portion of the event on Saturday, Jan. 28 by presenting prepared and impromptu speeches, participating in personal interviews and writing essays. Approximately 150 community volunteers will assist by serving as speech and interview judges.

The following week, on Saturday, Feb. 4, participants will take 30-minute multiple-choice tests in the subject areas of art, economics, literature, mathematics, music, science and social science. Excluding math, each test will incorporate the 2016-17 theme, "World War II."

The second and final day of the competition will culminate with the Super Quiz Relay, a high-energy contest 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 Super Quiz Relay is open to the public and will take place 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 conclude 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 during afterschool meetings; the remaining practice time is spent studying alone or with teammates outside of school.

Along with the commitment and content knowledge, academic decathlons promote communication and collaboration, considered key components of a 21st-century education.

“Teamwork plays a crucial role in the preparation process,” said OCDE Program Specialist Kristin Rigby. “Teammates hold each other to high expectations by creating tests and quizzes for each other, hosting competition scrimmages, dedicating time to practicing and analyzing each other’s prepared and impromptu speeches, as well as perfecting their personal interview techniques. Students who are stronger at one academic subject often tutor and coach their teammates.”

Top honors, medals and scholarships will be awarded at the OCAD Awards Ceremony at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 10 in the Bill Medley Auditorium at Santa Ana High School.

For additional information, contact Orange County Department of Education Program Specialist Kristin Rigby at (714) 966-4435 or krigby@ocde.us.

#