

PRESS RELEASE

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Maryland Coalition for Gifted and Talented Education (MCGATE)

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STUDENTS ADVOCATE FOR GIFTED EDUCATION IN ESSAY CONTEST

*Across the state, students express what gifted education means to them—
and how their lives might be very different without it.*

Baltimore, Maryland

A record number of Maryland public school students responded to the annual Maryland Coalition for Gifted and Talented Education (MCGATE) essay contest to express what the gifted education opportunities offered in their schools have meant to them. MCGATE received 286 applications from 10 school systems. A rubric-based blind review was conducted in three rounds by gifted education experts. Prizes were awarded to 12 elementary, middle, and high school students in 6 different school systems.

The students describe how the gifted education opportunities met their needs for acceleration and challenge, and sparked interests that are evolving into future goals aimed at improving our world. Many explained how they would use their talents to give back to their community. They also gave credit to their gifted education teachers, whom they said knew how to teach to their different learning needs.

The contest winners and all contest participants will be honored virtually on April 30 from 6:30 – 7:45 PM at *Celebrate Student Voices*. In addition to hearing from our contest winners, the event features special guest Dr. Anthony Vargas, Maryland Director of Advanced and Gifted/Talented programs, and a mini-workshop for students, *Jumpstart Your Talent with the Aptitudes of Innovators*. All are welcome, but registration is required. To register, go to www.mdgifted.org

Prizes were awarded to these essay contest winners:

Elementary School Division:

First Prize (\$50): Lance Leak, Capitol Heights Elementary, Prince George's County
Second Prize (\$25): Yatin Prasad, Northeast Elementary, Cecil County
Honorable Mentions: Sarah Bieda, Mount Airy Elementary, Carroll County; Ozinna Ifudu, Hammond Elementary, Howard County.

Middle School Division:

First Prize (\$50): Shaurya Chand, Clarksville Middle, Howard County
Second Prize (\$25): Deborah Oladipo, Walker Mill Middle, Prince George's County
Honorable Mentions: Emmanuella Joachim, Yusra Ajadi, Makaylah Butler, Walker Mill Middle

High School Division:

First Prize (\$100): Riley Adams, Long Reach High, Howard County
Second Prize (\$50): Apeksha Agarwal, Parkside High, Wicomico County
Honorable Mention: Kayla Parker, C. Milton Wright High, Harford County

Essay contest participants represented these 10 school systems: Baltimore County, Caroline, Carroll, Cecil, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Prince George's, Washington, Wicomico.

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