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Math Happenings

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[August 21, 2007](#) > MathEdge teams excel in 2007 World Math Contest

MathEdge teams excel in 2007 World Math Contest

Bay Area teams won 8 prestigious awards in 2007 Po Leung Kuk Primary Mathematics World Contest held in Hong Kong

Ewa Garg and Yick Cheung, Directors of MathEdge, led two teams consisting of eight students from the Bay Area, ranging from 6th to 7th grade. The two teams, Silicon Valley USA and California-East Bay, were invited to compete in the Eleventh Po Leung Kuk Primary Mathematics World Contest (PMWC) held from July 13th to 18th in Hong Kong.

Competing in the 11th PMWC were forty-five teams of about 200 students from various countries across the globe, including Mexico, Australia, Bulgaria, China, India, Japan, and South Africa. The participation in this contest was by invitation only.

Representing team Silicon Valley USA were Students Karen Lu (6th grader from Discovery Charter in San Jose), Namrata Garg (6th grader from Kennedy Middle School in Cupertino), Spencer Yee (6th grader from Ardenwood School in Fremont), and Jeffrey Zhang (7th grader from Bret Harte in San Jose).

Students Jiatong He (7th grader from Lawson Middle School in Cupertino), Philip

Liang (7th grader from JLS in Palo Alto), Aaron Zhou (7th grader from Hopkins in Fremont), and Alvin Zhou (6th grader from Mission Valley School in Fremont) comprised team California East Bay.

The teams have participated for the third year. Continuing the success of the previous years, the teams have won even more awards and higher honor. The two teams have won a total of eight awards (one more than last year): three from the team competition and five from the individual competition.

Forty-five teams were randomly separated into four groups, with eleven teams each, for the team competition. Despite the extremely difficult team problems and being placed in a strong group, team Silicon Valley USA unexpectedly won the 2nd place honor, outperforming many seasoned teams. That team score was high enough to earn first place in another group. This is the highest award that the team has achieved over the past 3 years.

The members of both teams were phenomenal in the contest. The sum of the team's individual scores has made California East Bay team the 2nd place winner and Silicon Valley USA team the 3rd place winner (just losing a tiebreak to team California East Bay) for the Po Leung Cup.

In the individual competition, student Philip Liang took the 2nd honor. Students Karen Lu, Namrata Garg, Jiatong He, and Spencer Yee took 3rd honor.

The above students were selected from two rounds of tryouts. The first tryout was held in early February with 112 students (ranging from 3rd to 7th graders) from 48 different Bay Area schools taking the qualifying test. From that, twelve students (the top 10%) were selected for the twelve-week training.

Besides the 8 students mentioned above, Edgar Chen (5th grader from Foothill

school in Saratoga), Sierra Lincoln (6th grader from Harker school in San Jose), Isaac Lam (6th grader from Miller in Cupertino), and Alice Zhao (7th grader from Hopkins in Fremont) were among the students who have gone through the training.

A second test was administered in late April to select the final eight contestants. For these students, all expenses (except airfare) for five days including room, board, and local tours in Hong Kong were covered. This was a unique opportunity for the elementary school and junior high students to have an academic and cultural exchange with children around the world.

Doing well in Math competitions requires sound reasoning, logical thinking and, most importantly, problem solving skills, which are different from the straightforward computational math done in school. Hence, MathEdge, which specializes in problem solving and competitive math training, believes in focusing on the entire problem solving process instead of only getting the right answers.