



# Scorpion Sentinel



March 8, 2011

Volume 1, Issue 2



## A Wee Bit O'Trivia

In Gaelic, "slainte" means:

- A) Saints Be Blessed
- B) To Good Friends
- C) Good Luck
- D) To Your Health

For the answer, see page 3.



## Oakland Mills High School GT Newsletter



## Preparing for the Future: Success of Diverse Students in OMHS AP and GT Courses

By: Alexis Anthony, OMHS Senior

Principal Frank Eastham believes that "Oakland Mills High School (OMHS) is one of Howard County's best-kept secrets." One major element of this greatness is the predominance of the school's Gifted and Talented (GT) and Advanced Placement (AP) programs. The rigor of these courses has empowered an abundant and very diverse population of OMHS students and prepared them to compete, contribute and adapt to a global society.

According to the High School Needs/Data Assessment (Inroads, Howard County, PSS), in the 2009-2010 school year, "28.2% of OMHS students were enrolled in GT classes and 18.2% in AP classes." The enrollment of students in the 18 AP courses which OMHS offers has increased by 4% since 2008: this includes the 3% increase of African American students and 2% increase of Hispanic students.

The success of students in these classes has been remarkable: 89% of OMHS students who took the English Language and Composition AP/GT exam received a passing score of 3 or higher and 86% of students who took the World History AP/GT exam received a 3 or higher. Both of these numbers impressively exceed the national average pass rate of 53% (collegeboard.com).

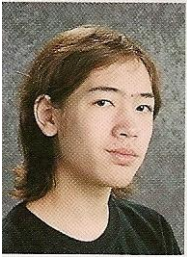
From the 2009-2010 school year to the present 2010-2011 school year, there has also been a 12.5% increase in the size of the OMHS Nation Honor Society. Currently, 38% of the students in NHS are minorities, 14% of whom are African American.

From statewide and national standpoints,

OMHS students have received further recognition. In the past three years, there have been 67 Maryland Distinguished Scholars: 6 semifinalists, and 9 finalists. There were also 19 National Merit Scholars and 5 finalists. In the class of 2011, OMHS has 6 National Achievement Scholars, a program for African American students, and of that 6 there are 2 finalists.

The accomplishments of these diverse OMHS students in advanced programs have propelled them into their next level of education where they continue to challenge themselves. In the past three years, the school has had one or more students accepted into 6 of the 8 Ivy League schools, including Harvard College, Princeton University, and Brown University, and other prestigious schools such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Carnegie Mellon University, Stanford University, Georgetown University, and even The Juilliard School. A number of these acceptances have been of minority students: Princeton University, Cornell University, Carnegie Mellon University, and several more.

So far this year, OMHS has had 3 students accepted into the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, two of whom are minorities. Others are still finding letters trickling in from schools including University of Pennsylvania, Brown University, and Yale University, and are starting to make final college decisions. Oakland Mills High has empowered countless students to push themselves beyond their limits as they develop their education. The achievements of students, both minorities and non-minorities, are an impressive aspect, which makes Oakland Mills a powerhouse for student success. It is surprising that such a secret can be so well kept.



Ross

## Scorpion Spotlight: Ross Rheingans-Yoo

Ross Rheingans-Yoo is a junior at Oakland Mills High School. He is an intern at the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory working on *Revolutionizing Prosthetics, Phase 3* in their Biomedicine department. He has been involved with many phases of the project, from software development to user-interface design. Ross plans to continue his internship over the summer and through his senior year in order to further advance the software he is developing to translate patients' motor impulses into commands to a robotic limb.

Ross was selected as a Varsity Scholar and will be honored and interviewed for televised broadcast at a date TBD. He will be presenting at the Howard County Student Learning Conference in April at Johns Hopkins APL- Kossiakoff Center.

Ross is an accomplished young man who has been on the school's soccer team, debate team, and math team just to name a few. Ross is also a member of the National Honor Society, awarded a black belt from American Martial Arts and was recently inducted into the Tri-M Music Honor Society and the Alpha Achievers (an honors organization for young men of color). Ross has mentored and tutored as a form of community service and, in his "off-time", Ross fences.

To see Ross' televised broadcast, stay tuned to:  
[http://hcpstv.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view\\_id=2](http://hcpstv.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2)

To learn more about Varsity Scholars, go to:  
[http://www.hcpss.org/gt/high/adv\\_research.shtml](http://www.hcpss.org/gt/high/adv_research.shtml)

## How We Chose OMHS: A Mom's Perspective

*For everyone of us that succeeds, it's because there's somebody there to show you the way out. The light doesn't always necessarily have to be in your family; for me it was teachers and school.*

- Oprah Winfrey

Almost a year ago, my family transferred back to the U.S. after being stationed in Japan for three years. Not originally being from Maryland, we needed to decide where we wanted to live. As our son was going to be a freshman in high school, we decided to base our decision of where to live on the school that we wanted him to attend.

Coming from a military family, our son has attended many different schools; OMHS makes school number eight. While having a good GT program was essential to us, we also wanted more for our son—we wanted a place where he would thrive. Freshman year is challenging enough, but it is even more challenging getting re-acclimated to American culture.

As we didn't know anything about the area, my husband and I began driving around to different high schools in the local counties to interview the schools. We got varied reactions. Some schools did not understand why we were there, while others politely met with us to tell us about their programs.

We wish we could tell you that it was the teachers or the administration that sold us on Oakland Mills, but we can't. You see, by the time we got to OMHS, the school had just closed. It was Friday and we were still weary from jet lag. A little dejected, we noticed three students sitting on a bench outside of school. Not completely discouraged, we approached them and asked them what they thought of the school. Without hesitation, the female student exuberantly exclaimed, "We love it!" Then she and the two young men told us why they loved the school. They described the feeling of community. They even described their football team with a sense of pride, even though it was currently struggling. We got a sense that they wanted to be champions. From what they told us, we

*A Wee Bit O'Trivia  
Answer (from pg. 1):*

If you guessed,  
"D) To Your Health,"  
then get out of your  
"cathaoir" and do an  
Irish jig for you are  
CORRECT!

To help out with  
the Scorpion  
Sentinel  
please contact us  
at  
omhsgtparentadvisor  
y  
@gmail.com.

Please submit your  
article, artwork, or  
announcements by

Are you interested in  
being a student rep?  
Or do you just want  
to get involved?

Not only is  
volunteering fun, but  
it looks good on your  
college transcripts  
as well.

GTAC is looking for  
reps from each  
grade. Please  
contact Mr. James at  
410-313-6949  
or go by room 204.

*A Mom's  
Perspective  
Continued*

knew that our son  
would be happy here.

When we were  
overseas, it was drilled  
into us that each person  
is an ambassador for  
America through our  
actions and our words.  
We knew that people



### March News and Events



#### ✓ **3/8 at 4:30pm: Movie Presentation—The Great Debaters**

OMHS Music Room

February is Black History Month. It is also Gifted and Talented Month in Howard County. Oakland Mills High School will be hosting a "Meet and Greet" Movie Afternoon to celebrate them both, Tuesday, March 8th, 2011 at 4:30 in the choir room. Come celebrate and enjoy the movie! For more information contact Vincent James at 410-313-6949 or at [vincent\\_james@hcpss.org](mailto:vincent_james@hcpss.org).

\*Note: The movie was originally scheduled on Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> but was rescheduled due to the snowstorm.

#### ✓ **3/8 at 6:30pm: GTAC (Gifted and Talented Advisory Council) Meeting**

OMHS Media Center/Library

This meeting is open to all staff, students, and parents wishing to get involved and create an atmosphere of empowerment and learning.

#### ✓ **3/11 NO SCHOOL—Countywide Professional Development Day**



Congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. Kim who had a baby girl.  
Mr. and Mrs. Florida who had a baby girl.  
Mr. and Mrs. Feldman who had a baby boy.