



# NEWS RELEASE

## For Immediate Release

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## **Granada Hills Charter High School Wins California Academic Decathlon *Decathletes Advance to Nationals, April 16-18***

Los Angeles--- Granada Hills Charter High School in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) today was named winner of the 2015 California Academic Decathlon competition. Continuing its winning reign, the San Fernando Valley school previously won the state and national decathlons from 2011-2013. The team scored 59040.3 points out of a possible 66,000.

Members of the winning team are: Irene Lee, Fernando Sanchez, Peter Cho (Honor Students); Jenean Docter, Jasmin Kim, Natalie Gonzalez (Scholastic Students); and Tanthai Pongstien and Jorge Zepeda (Varsity Students).

The eight-member team will pursue the state of California's thirteenth consecutive national title at the 34th Annual United States Academic Decathlon Competition, scheduled April 16 – 18, in Garden Grove, California.

A formidable contender for the U.S. Academic Decathlon, Granada Hills Charter came on the scene in 2007 when they won its first LAUSD ACADECA competition. LAUSD has dominated the U.S. academic decathlon competition, earning 15 national titles since 1986. LAUSD has also won 21 state contests.

"Congratulations to Granada Hills Charter for reclaiming the state title," said Board Member Tamar Galatzan, who represents the school. "I know the team will do us proud when it represents LAUSD in the national competition. I'm grateful to the students, coaches and families of all the teams for their hard work and dedication in preparing for this challenge."

In addition to Granada Hill's victory, last year's state and national champion, El Camino Real Charter High School received the Large School title with 58,371.2 points and is eligible to compete in the United States Academic Decathlon On-line National Competitions taking place in April.

"Congratulations to all our teams that proudly represented the LAUSD in the State Academic Decathlon," said Superintendent Ramon C. Cortines. "I wish Granada Hills Charter great success in the National competition. The entire LAUSD family is proud of your competitive spirit, commitment and perseverance."

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In the Super Quiz, El Camino Real finished first with 5,025 points out of 6,000 points possible. Granada Hills Charter High finished second with 4,875 points. Three schools tied for third place at 4,800 points: South Pasadena High/Los Angeles County, Marshall High and Franklin High.

The winners were announced before an enthusiastic crowd at the 2015 California Academic Decathlon's award ceremony at the Sacramento Memorial Auditorium.

Rounding out the top 10 scoring teams were three LAUSD Schools: Marshall (54963.9), placed fourth, Franklin (53603.8), placed fifth and Garfield (51263.7) placed seventh.

In all, 574 students representing 66 high school teams from across the state competed in this year's California Academic Decathlon. Teams are composed of three Honor students (3.75 and above GPA), three Scholastic students (3.00-3.74 GPA), and three Varsity students (2.99 GPA and below).

Outstanding merit was awarded to the top three students in the Honors category, Division 1: Fernando Sanchez with 9449.1 points from Granada Hills Charter, Irene Lee with 9387.4 points also from Granada Hills Charter and Ethan Waldman from El Camino Real Charter High School with 9330.8 points.

Decathletes compete in 10-quiz competitions involving speech, interviews, essay, art, economics, language and literature, mathematics, music, social science and the Super Quiz. The scores of all 10 quizzes are tallied together and the winner announced. This year's study topic was Alternatives in Energy: Ingenuity & Innovation.

The Academic Decathlon started locally in Orange County, California, in 1968 under the direction of the late Dr. Robert Peterson, who was then Orange County Superintendent of Schools. The competition went statewide in 1979 and has been a national event since 1982. The LAUSD earned its first of many state and national trophies in 1986 by Marshall High School.

**RETURN TO L.A. INFORMATION:** El Camino Real Charter High School team, their coaches and Cliff Ker, coordinator of the LAUSD Academic Decathlon, are scheduled to return to Los Angeles via Bob Hope Airport (formerly Burbank Airport) aboard Southwest Airline Flight 128, which is scheduled to arrive at 6:05 p.m., Sunday, March 22.

Newly crowned state champs, Granada Hills Charter decathletes are scheduled to return on Sunday, March 22 on Southwest, Flight number 298, arrives at 7:10 p.m. Bob Hope Airport is located at 2627 N. Hollywood Way, Burbank, CA 91505.

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