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Local Student Wins Top Latin Prize in the Nation

Submitted by Elena Pang

Miramonte student Clark Pang Photo Provided

While most students are working on their tans and travel logs during the summer months, 16-year-old Clark Pang, a rising senior at Miramonte High School in Orinda, spent his summer competing at the National Junior Classical League (NJCL) national competition.

Every year, the nation's top Latin students convene for one week at a major university to compete at the NJCL Convention. This year, students from the top high schools and middle schools competed head-on in the most grueling competition for Latin-Classics students from July 26-31 at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Out of more than 1,600 students who competed, Pang won the most coveted prize in the nation for Latin student scholars: First Place in Overall Academics.

Pang participated in 13 individual contests out of the 16 categories offered. He won First Place in Classical Art, Greek Derivatives, Greek Life and Literature, Hellenic History, Mottos, Quotations, and Abbreviations, Roman Life, and Latin Derivatives. The final champion is based on the cumulative scores achieved from all the tests. The one achieving the highest score is awarded the top prize.

In addition to winning the top Overall Academic prize, Pang won individual first place medals for achieving the highest score in Classical Art, Greek Derivatives, Greek Life & Literature, Hellenic History, Mottos Quotations & Abbreviations and Roman Life. He accumulated the most points to become the top champion amongst fierce powerhouse competitors (past and previous) from Massachusetts and Virginia, typically known for producing champions. Thirty-eight states were represented. Pang represented the state of California and the Bay Area.

This achievement was a culmination of three years of

studying since he fell in love with Latin and the Classics during his freshman year at Miramonte, due in large part to the inspirational teaching of Magister Matt Davis.

For the past 3 years, Pang has been the perennial top Northern California Latin student in the regional competition (Ludi Octobres) as well as the California state champion at the California Junior Classical League (CAJCL) convention.

Pang is also an award-winning cellist and the youngest musician to record the complete Bach Unaccompanied Suites for cello. He founded Music Prisonations at age 12, a concert series bringing hope to inmates through music, and was awarded by the Davidson Institute for his contribution to society.

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