

# Local Youth Grabs Top Math Honors

By ERICA COLEMAN  
Staff Writer

Facing nearly 120 students from 22 local schools and 48 math problems, an area middle schooler took top honors at the 17th annual MATHCOUNTS competition.

Justin Lo, an eighth-grader at McDougle Middle School, received first place in Saturday's individual rounds of competition that challenged local seventh- and eighth-graders to complete mathematics problems as accurately and quickly as possible. The competition took place at Martin Middle School in Raleigh.

Justin credited his mother, Li-Lin Lo, as a main factor in his win. She helped him train at home by finding practice problems on the Internet.

"It's lots of fun to do math for me," Justin said. "Sometimes I do math at home just for the fun of it."

According to Li-Lin Lo, very early in Justin's life she could tell that he had a good memory and a natural inclination toward numbers.

"He was into numbers," she said. "He always had them in his head."

Tryouts for the MATHCOUNTS competition began early last November at McDougle Middle School in Chapel Hill.

Contestants were required to take a test and the students with the best scores

were chosen as finalists to try out for McDougle's team.

Steve Messiter, a co-coach for Justin's team, said an important requirement for potential contestants included a strong love for math.

"It was very important for the contestants to show interest," he said.

Along with co-coach Sara Jasinski, Messiter worked with Lo and the other McDougle middle schoolers starting in early November.

Justin said he learned various types of problems and how to solve them at these practices.

"(They taught us) techniques of how to do the problems so that we would be able to do them faster than the slow way," he said.

In the future, Justin said he hoped to make a career out of research science, although he also said he enjoyed playing the violin and writing concertos, a hobby he has been pursuing for nine-and-a-half years.

Having won the local round, Justin will go on to compete statewide against other winners in similar competitions in Hickory on March 18.

Fourth-place winner Charles Yu, who was also on the McDougle team, will be accompanying Lo to the state competition.

Contestants will then vie for the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C., for the national competition.



Justin Lo, first-place winner of the local chapter MATHCOUNTS competition, prepares for the statewide competition with his teacher Steve Messiter at McDougle Middle School.

DTH/KATE MELLNIK

Messiter, who will now be working one-on-one with Justin in preparation for the statewide competition, said he

hoped the MATHCOUNTS program would jump-start other students' interest in math.

"I hope it will get more people involved in math, as a competition rather than class."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

## Fla. Seeks End to Affirmative Action

By ALICIA GADDY  
Staff Writer

Florida Gov. Jeb Bush recently introduced a plan to end race-based admissions at University of Florida-system schools and provide an additional \$20 million in financial aid.

While Bush touted the move as an effort to increase diversity on Florida campuses, others said it would have the opposite effect.

Justin Sayfie, spokesman for Bush's office, said the One-Florida Initiative, originally proposed in November, would use socioeconomic status and geography instead of race and ethnicity as admissions criteria.

"Governor Bush is opposed to racial preferences and race-based admissions," Sayfie said.

As part of the One-Florida Initiative, all students who graduate in the top 20 percent of their high school class would receive admissions to the University of Florida system. The additional aid would help pay for these students.

"Part of the plan will increase state-based financial aid by 43 percent," Sayfie said.

The plan will go to the UF Board of Regents later this month, and will then go to the Republican-led legislature.

*"I think the problem is that Jeb Bush's proposal is one that is not helpful toward the integration of schools ..."*

HILARY SHELTON

Washington, D.C. NAACP Director

If the plan passes, Sayfie said the new admissions standards and the financial aid package would add between 400 and 1,200 new minority students to the 10 University of Florida schools.

Sayfie said he expected the legislature to approve the plan.

But some officials doubted the positive effects of the One-Florida Initiative.

Hilary Shelton, director of the Washington, D.C., National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said the plan was a step backward for Florida.

Shelton said he was hopeful about the state's new financial aid program, but he said aid did not make up for the end of race-based affirmative action policies.

"I think the problem is that Jeb Bush's proposal is one that is not helpful toward the integration of schools in Florida," Shelton said. "The state of

Florida has an awful history of integration."

He added that Florida's historically black universities might lose some of their identity if the plan passed.

Sayfie said the plan would help integrate all system colleges and universities, benefiting the entire education system, including historically black colleges and universities.

"There's really no adverse effects on the state's historically black colleges," he said.

But N.C. schools are not following in Florida's footsteps.

UNC-system Vice President Joni Worthington said affirmative action policies were still used in admissions to UNC schools.

Worthington also said the UNC system had recently reviewed its admissions policies.

"In late 1997, President Broad asked all 16 chancellors to conduct a careful review of financial aid policy," she said.

"All of the chancellors have assured the president that our policies in admissions and financial aid comply with N.C. law.

"Diversity is, of course, an integral part on all 16 campuses."

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

## Study: Oral Sex Poses HIV Risk

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention used a study of gay men to determine risks of oral sex.

By EUGENE WHEELER  
Staff Writer

Researchers have found evidence that a significant percentage of new HIV infections in some groups of gay men result from oral sex.

The study, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, focused on 102 gay men in San Francisco who had recently contracted HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

Of those men, 7.8 percent acquired the disease from performing oral sex, indicating that oral sex poses a higher risk than previously thought.

In the study, cases in which oral sex appeared to be the route of infection were extensively evaluated. If the subject displayed other risk behaviors for contracting HIV, oral sex was excluded as the cause of infection.

The CDC's new testing method allows researchers to pinpoint the first time how and when an individual con-

tracted the HIV virus.

Because of the stringent requirements, the study's results might actually be a low estimate, according to a CDC press release.

John Leonard, executive director of the Gay City Health Project, a Seattle-based initiative aimed at controlling the spread of AIDS in the gay community, said the study provided important information on the spread of AIDS.

"We have always known that oral sex is less risky than anal sex, though not risk free," he said.

"This study's findings underscore the importance of communication with your sexual partners about HIV/STD status and what risks you may or may not be willing to take."

Chatham County Health Director Wayne Sherman said HIV could be transmitted through oral sex if the person giving oral sex to an infected person had an open sore in his or her mouth.

He said information about the dangers of oral sex must be distributed to the public to increase awareness.

"Condom use is essential," Sherman said. "But not just anal and vaginal sex, but now even oral sex - unprotected sex is risky sex."

Emily O'Barr, coordinator of human

sexuality programs at the UNC Center for Healthy Student Behaviors, also said students needed to be aware of the dangers associated with oral sex.

"Some students know, but not enough students realize the danger associated with oral sex," O'Barr said.

"Too often people don't consider oral sex (to be) sex."

She said the important thing was not whether or not it was technically considered to be sex, but whether or not it spread disease - and it does. "Since this is a risk, you need to pay attention to it, and you need to make choices you can feel good about," O'Barr said.

She said there were no statistics on sexual activity or STD infection of UNC students, but the dangers were real.

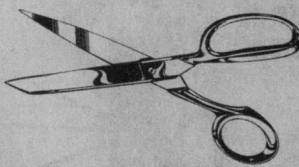
"Qualitatively it is happening - all STDs on campus," she said.

O'Barr said next week was National Condom Week and that the Center for Healthy Student Behaviors would be working to raise awareness on campus.

She said students interested in confidential HIV testing or STD prevention programs should contact the Center for Healthy Student Behaviors at 966-6586.

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