

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Good Hope Country Day School Wins MATHCOUNTS Competition On St. Croix

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ST. CROX -- The Virgin Islands Department of Education held its annual St. Croix District MATHCOUNTS competition on Thursday, February 14 at the UVI Great Hall. Four Good Hope Country Day School students displayed their strong mathematical abilities allowing the school to remain the district champions following its 2017 win, according to D.O.E.

Church of God Holiness Academy and the John H. Woodson Junior High School placed second and third, respectively.

Then-Acting Insular Superintendent Maria Encarnacion shared welcome remarks before the competition began.

"This morning I bring greetings from the Virgin Islands Department of Education and from our Commissioner-designee Raquel Berry-Benjamin, who sends her best wishes to each and every one of you as you compete this morning in our MATHCOUNTS competition," Ms. Encarnacion said. "It's a wonderful activity and I want to thank all persons involved, the schools that are taking part and I want to wish everyone best wishes and have a wonderful experience this morning."

MATHCOUNTS moderator Basil Williams, Sr., also shared some positive, reinforcing words with the mathletes before reading the competition rules.

"I want to commend the schools for participating. I know over the last year-two years things have been less than ideal, so it's commendable that you have risen to the occasion and came forward to participate today," he said. "I want to encourage you to continue to nurture that interest in mathematics, by doing so you will be opening many doors that are closed to others who shy away from the more challenging courses."

The MATHCOUNTS competition began with a 40-minute Sprint round that consisted of 30 problems students responded to without the use of a calculator. The target round followed with competitors using their mathematical reasoning and problem-solving skills to answer problems with permission to use their calculators.

The look of urgency dawned across students faces as they hustled to finish their math problems after Moderator Williams announced, "You have 3 minutes left to finish."

The last official round, the team round had the mathletes work within their teams to answer ten questions with the help of their calculator.

Each segment was followed by a ten-minute break.

Marcus Miller, John H. Woodson Jr. High School eighth-grader shared his thoughts on the first round.

"It was a little challenging but I am looking forward to the next rounds. It really makes you think fast—but smart, since you're trying to beat the clock," he said.

Students were provided lunch prior to the highlight of competition, the unofficial Countdown Round. During the Countdown, the top eight mathletes (based on scores in the Sprint and Target Rounds) battled head-to-head in a test of the speed and accuracy of their "mental math." This round determined the competition winner and advancement to the State Competition.

Che Guerra of Good Hope Country Day School won the Countdown Round against his classmate and 2019 St. Croix District Intermediate Spelling Bee Winner Michael Atwell.

Ranked by most points, the top 10 mathletes are:

1. Che Guerra, Good Hope Country Day
2. Tiara Stevens, Church of God of Holiness
3. Michael Atwell, Good Hope Country Day
4. Anil Prasad, Good Hope Country Day
5. Lucaformo D'adamio, Good Hope Country Day

6. Jaden Gonzalez, Church of God of Holiness
7. Samir Boucenna, Church of God of Holiness
8. Zanyjah Rodriguez, Church of God of Holiness
9. Jose Nunez, Church of God of Holiness
10. Marcus Miller, John H. Woodson.

MATHCOUNTS Winning Team

1. Good Hope Country Day
2. Church of God of Holiness Academy
3. John H. Woodson Jr. High School

The Top 10 students from the district will compete against the Top 10 in the St. Thomas – St. John District on Thursday, March 21 at the State MATHCOUNTS Competition in St. Croix.

Following the state competition, four winners will be selected to represent the Territory at the 2019 Raytheon MATHCOUNTS National Championship, slated for May 11-14 in Orlando, Florida.

Local sponsors of the 2019 MATHCOUNTS competition include the Department of Education, St. Croix Mid Isle Rotary Club and the University of the Virgin Islands.

MATHCOUNTS is a national program designed to improve math skills among U.S. students. The program focuses on middle school students, who are at a crucial stage in developing and sustaining math interest and ability. Students who do not begin developing strong problem-solving, logical thinking and analytical abilities in middle school will face an uphill battle later in life if they wish to pursue a medical, scientific, mathematical, engineering or technical career.