

## MATHCOUNTS adds up to scholarships

**Yuki Inoue** of Beaumont Middle School came in second, and **Sadik Shahidain** of Lexington Traditional Magnet School was third in the state MATHCOUNTS competition in Louisville. The top four finishers each won a full-tuition, four-year college scholarship to either the University of Kentucky or the University of Louisville.

The four also get an expense-paid trip to the national MATHCOUNTS competition May 8-11 in Denver, where they will represent Kentucky. Each individual also will compete for additional scholarships, a trip to U.S. Space Camp, medals and other awards.

**Kristian Klaene**, whose LTMS team won first place March 8 in the state contest, will guide the Kentucky team in Denver. Co-coach **Keith Durham** is helping him prepare the students, though he won't be able to make the trip.

"We will make every effort to get the students together as a team as often as possible," Klaene said. "In between meetings in person, we will coordinate practicing common tests/problem types through their individual coaches via e-mail. The team needs to feel that they are just that -- a team -- just as they were with their school throughout the chapter and state competitions."

The other two students on the Kentucky team are Evan Miller of Owensboro Middle School, who took top honors at state, and Megan Hooven of Georgetown Middle School, who came in fourth.

Klaene said his LTMS team did well at state because most of the group has been together in class and on the math team for a few years and they know how to work both as individuals and as a team.

"Three quarters of our team are in precalculus as eighth-graders, and our seventh-grader is taking geometry, so they have seen mathematics beyond the scope of the competition," he said. "Despite that, the main qualities that served them in the competition were having worked similar problem types over and over and over again and being able to apply general problem-solving to problem types they had not seen before."

Klaene said students competing in MATHCOUNTS need not only mathematical aptitude but also dedication to wanting to learn all they can.

"When it comes time for competition, students need focus and confidence in their abilities," he said. "For the team part of the competition, students need to trust each other and know each other's strengths. With only 20 minutes to do 10 questions, they have to share the load.

"Beyond the actual team round, however, there are more intangible qualities that make a team strong, including spirit, camaraderie and support for each other."

Among other winners at state: **Beaumont Middle School's** team finished fourth, and **Idrees Kahloon** of LTMS came in fifth in the individual competition (winning a \$1,500 scholarship).

Other students in the top 25 included 11<sup>th</sup> place, **Vania Ma** of Winburn; 12<sup>th</sup>, **Todd Montgomery**, Morton; 17<sup>th</sup>, **Valerie Sarge**, Winburn; 20<sup>th</sup>, **Patrick Lutz**, Morton; and 22<sup>nd</sup>, **Jessie Li**, LTMS.

Nearly 100 students in grades 6-8 from schools throughout Kentucky participated.

MATHCOUNTS is a math coaching and competition program designed to develop and strengthen math, science, leadership and teamwork skills.

