

## DELCO HI-Q TEAMS HONORED AT "PARTNERS IN EDUCATION" DINNER

Delaware County high school students who took part in the 2005 Delco Hi-Q season -- all 210 of them -- were honored at the first-ever "Partners in Education" Dinner on May 19 at the Drexelbrook Corporate Events Center in Drexel Hill.

The gala event was presented by the Foundation of the Delaware County Chamber and the Delaware County Intermediate Unit. Its main sponsor was the Franklin Mint Federal Credit Union (FMFCU), which also was one of two primary corporate sponsors of the 2005 season.

A highlight of the evening for the three top-placing teams in this year's competition -- Strath Haven, Penncrest and Garnet Valley -- was having dinner with special guest speaker Alex Trebek, genial host of TV's popular quiz show "Jeopardy!" that's seen at 7 p.m. on Philadelphia Channel 6-ABC. Trebek ate his salad with Garnet Valley, his main course with Strath Haven and then moved to the Penncrest team table to have his dessert with them.

The kids were delighted.

Joe Walker, a senior and Penncrest team captain, said Trebek's appearance and the dinner was a wonderful way to end his third and final year of Hi-Q. Garnet Valley's Jeff Conway, a sophomore, said it was a pleasure to talk with Trebek, noting he's "someone who understands academic competition."

Said Ellen Donnelly of the first place Strath Haven team, "It's an honor to have such a celebrity share our special evening with us."

The Strath Haven champions received \$1,000 for their school and a trophy to display for a year. For placing second, Penncrest was awarded \$750 for its school, and Garnet Valley received \$500 for placing third. The awards were presented by Rick Durante, FMFCU Director of Education, and Patty Langdon of Kimberly-Clark Chester Operations, the other primary Delco Hi-Q sponsor.

Also honored was the first All Delco Hi-Q Team, comprised of a student from each of 21 teams that participated in the nation's oldest continuous academic quiz competition for high school scholars. Individual awards were presented by Phil Heron, editor of the *Delaware County Daily Times*, and dinner chairman John Unangst, president/CEO of FMFCU and a member of the Foundation board of directors.

In addition, Delco Hi-Q Executive Director Donna Zerby commended several people who make Hi-Q the success that it is. In addition to the faculty advisors, she cited Dave Bramble, technician with the I.U. who handles all the technical aspects of each academic contest, and veteran quizmaster/professional actor Tom McCarthy. She called McCarthy "a strong communicator who cares so much about making the Hi-Q experience more than a competitive event." She also had words of praise for Unangst.

"Your tremendous energy, initiative and leadership have been the basis for all the exciting things happening to Hi-Q this year," Mrs. Zerby told him.

Dr. Harry Jamison, Executive Director of the county I.U., then surprised Mrs. Zerby by naming her the first inductee into the newly created Delco Hi-Q Hall of Honor. He noted there would be no Hi-Q without her.

Philadelphia Channel 6-ABC anchor Rick Williams served as master of ceremonies. "This really is 'the big story on Action News.' Programs like Hi-Q really do prepare our young people. Their participation and dedication makes every team a winner," said Williams before introducing Trebek.

In an informal message peppered with humor, the special guest speaker recalled that early in his broadcasting career in Canada, he hosted a high school quiz show called "Reach for the Top."

"I discovered then how sharp high school kids can be," he said.

He noted that in hosting "Jeopardy!" for the past 21 years, he's met a lot of bright people. All things being equal, he said, bright people will succeed more than they will fail. And this could be a problem, he noted, because it's important to know how not to win. Losing provides valuable lessons in life and insights into one's character, he said.

Trebek's advice to young people? Develop a sense of perspective and a sense of humor, learn patience and be flexible. Take good thoughts and put them into action.

"And trust in luck. It will play an important part in your life," said Trebek, before going down into the large and enthusiastic audience to take questions from students.

In an interview before the dinner, Trebek said learning is one of life's great pleasures. He urged students to continue learning throughout life. Following the dinner, he had his picture taken with each of the 21 Delco Hi-Q teams.

The longest-running academic quiz contest in the nation, Hi-Q was founded in Delaware County in 1948 and has expanded to several states.

“After 57 years, Delco Hi-Q needs to be recognized like this every year,” said Unangst, about the dinner. “In the future, we hope to attract a quality, education-oriented dinner speaker who has an interest in students -- but the focus will always be on the students.”

Strath Haven’s Silvertones provided music before the dinner. Its Delco Hi-Q championship team includes seniors Daniel Isaacs, Wallingford; Thomas Powers, Swarthmore; Max Ruby, Rose Valley; and Andrea Telenko, Rutledge; juniors Alena Bortkiewicz, Swarthmore; Ellen Donnelly, Wallingford; and Josh Durgin, Swarthmore; and sophomores George Beatty, Wallingford; Sneha Narasimhan, Wallingford and Krupa Patel, Wallingford.

Faculty advisors are Nino DeProphetis and Mark Linkins

Second place Penncrest’s team includes two sets of brothers -- senior Tim Graham and sophomore Robby Graham of Glen Mills, and senior Joe Walker and junior Jeffrey Walker of Media. Also on the team were seniors Robert Clain, Media; and Sarah Lu, Media; juniors Aimee Davis, Glen Mills and Mary Flannery, Media; and sophomores Emily Moberg, Media; and Erik Virbitsky, Media.

Faculty advisor is Michael Ludwig.

Third place Garnet Valley’s team includes brothers Ravi Gupta, a senior, and Neal Gupta, a freshman, of Boothwyn. Other members were seniors Paul Kim, Glen Mills; Zein Nakhoda, Chadds Ford; and Corky Wharton, Boothwyn; juniors Brendan McGeehan, Boothwyn; Chris Sukhu, Boothwyn; and Sohum Trivedi, Glen Mills; and sophomore Jeffrey Conway, Glen Mills.

Faculty advisors are Carol Law and Carol Rockafellow.

Members of the 2004-2005 All Delco Hi-Q team are Liz Brennan, Academy of Notre Dame de Namur; Kevin Lafferty, Academy Park; Tom Merlie, Archbishop Carroll; Livia Fortunato, Cardinal O’Hara; Chelsea Rogers, Chester; Ryan Chominski, Chichester; Jay Moneymaker, Delaware County Christian School; Zein Nakhoda, Garnet Valley; Sara Shaw, Haverford; Brian Peltz, Interboro; Jessica Henderson, Marple Newtown; Michael Nolan, Monsignor Bonner.

Also Karie Swan, Penn Wood; Joseph Walker, Penncrest; Melanie Townsend, Radnor; Joe Stranix, Ridley; Alexander Ho, Springfield; Andrea Telenko, Strath Haven; Karly Moletteri, Sun Valley; Kristen Wilt, The Christian Academy; and Stephen Mann, Upper Darby.

#####