

## **Williams Elementary, Lincoln Middle win national chess championships; local students named to All-America chess team**

Two Alachua County Public School teams and two individual students won championships at the 2019 National K-12 Grade Championships held this past weekend in Orlando. The annual competition is put on by the U.S. Chess Federation, the official governing body for chess players in the U.S.



A Williams Elementary School team made up of Erick Zhao, Abhiram Pothuri, Dylan Yu, Jerry Yao, Jolie Huang, Saharsh Pothu, Isaac Son, Nick Liu, Aaron Wang and Noah Jang took first place in the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade division. Zhao also won the individual championship in that category.

The Lincoln Middle team, including Bach Ngo, Daniel Zhang, Owen Parks-Church, Kevin Liu, Marcus Shih and Shiven Sharma won first place in the 6<sup>th</sup> Grade division, with Ngo also taking the individual championship.



At the tournament, Ngo and Zhao were also recognized as members of the 2020 All-America Chess Team. All-Americans are selected based on their age, chess rating and their performance throughout the year. Zhao was also a member of the 2019 All-America team. Only 55 young people across the nation were selected to this year's team.

This is not the first time many of these students have earned championships. Zhao, Pothuri, Yu and Liu were also members of the Williams team that took first place in the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade division in December of 2018, with Zhao taking the top individual award. Ngo, Zhang and Parks-Church were also members of Williams' championship 5<sup>th</sup> grade team last year, and Ngo took second place individually.

Other district teams were among the top performers at this year's competition. They include teams from Buchholz High School, which took 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the 11<sup>th</sup> Grade division (Alan Wang, Samvel Antonyan and Michael Wu) and 5<sup>th</sup> place in the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade division (Hannah Ciupe, Ahan Banerjee Mishra and Abhinav Pothuri). Another team from Williams, including Anay Gupta, Jack Judy and Jason Liu Zhang, won 4<sup>th</sup> place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade division, while a team from Wiles Elementary, including Peter Luo, Allen Zhiwen Li and Jonah Taemin Jang, took 4<sup>th</sup> place in the Kindergarten division.

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