

**Washington students take top honors: Largest academic event in City**

The Richmond Review, *Paul Kozakiewicz*

10 April 2008 - On Saturday, March 15, more than 500 middle and high school students from Northern California schools convened at San Francisco State University to compete in the largest annual academic event for San Francisco area students. More than 1,000 middle and high school students, volunteer judges, educational leaders, and community guests took part in the sixth-annual World Affairs Challenge, hosted by San Francisco-based global education non-profit World Savvy ([www.worldsavvy.org](http://www.worldsavvy.org)).

The central topic of this year's World Affairs Challenge was global health. Students from 26 local schools prepared comprehensive presentations (which include proposed solutions) on issues as diverse as a comparative study of countries that provide universal health care, examining how different nations combat child mortality and studying possible side effects to global adoption of genetically modified foods.

Overall, 96 students from San Francisco participated in this year's program, including 15 students from George Washington High School. Seven of the students received a second place award in the Best Overall Team category. Award-winning students included seniors Meng Deng, Kevin Nguy, Keegan Quan, Kevin Luong, Chris Yee, Judy Chin and Gregory Wai. Meng Deng also won the first place award in the Best Collaborative Question category.

The seven award-winning students have been competing in the World Affairs Challenge for the past four years, representing Washington since they were ninth graders.

Of her experience at the World Affairs Challenge, senior Judy Chin said: "It is a lot of fun and a good way to learn about issues that plague the world."

Students at the World Affairs Challenge participated in four separate events. They prepared a 15-minute presentation and presented a descriptive poster in groups of 7 to 12. Students also studied current affairs and world geography in preparation for a quiz, and practiced teamwork skills for a group problem-solving activity in which students were grouped with youth from other schools to solve a real-world scenario.

"Today's middle school and high school students will need a keen understanding of international issues and global citizenship in order to effectively face challenges, such as the spread of disease, terrorism, global drug trade and environmental degradation in the years ahead," explained Dana Curran, executive director of World Savvy.