



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Sweetwater Middle students master the nation's WordMasters**

A team of **Gwinnett County Public Schools (GCPS)** students from **Sweetwater Middle** recently earned the nation's highest honor in the WordMasters Challenge—a national language arts competition which consists of three separate meets held at intervals during the school year. Competing in the very difficult Gold Division and coached by Sweetwater Middle teacher **Lois Bean**, the school's sixth graders placed first among 191 school teams competing at this grade level and in this division at the first meet held in December.

In addition to the team award, several of the school's students also earned top honors for individual achievement. These students are sixth graders **Kaitlyn Choe, Joshua De La Fuente, James Ha, Rodrigo Herrera, Ibum Obu, Mariela Prieto-Torres, Sofia Salazar, and Jeremiah Scott**, and eighth grader **Thienkhanh Nguyen**. They all earned perfect scores in the meet, while only 26 sixth graders and only 62 eighth graders did so nationwide. Other Sweetwater Middle "saints" achieving outstanding results in the meet included sixth graders **Liliana Acosta, Manuela Caceres, Ava Chen, Daneil Dixon, Nabid Farvez, Marlon Garibay, Oscar Magana-Rivera, Buduka Ogonor, Darlene Praseuth, Lauren Sengaphone, and Jorge Valle Carranza**; seventh grader **Aminah Mohammed**; and eighth graders **Margaret Baethke, Nayia Kenney, and Violaine Muhemedi**.

The WordMasters Challenge is an exercise in critical thinking that first encourages students to become familiar with a set of interesting new words considerably more difficult than grade level. The competition then challenges them to use those words to complete analogies, expressing various kinds of logical relationships. The challenge helps students learn to think both analytically and metaphorically. Though most vocabulary-boosting and analogy-solving activities have been created for high school students, the WordMasters materials have been specifically designed for younger students, in grades three through eight. They are particularly well suited for able and interested children who rise to the challenge of learning new words and enjoy the logical puzzles posed by analogies.

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2010 Winner of



The WordMasters Challenge has been administered for the past 25 years by a company based in Allendale, New Jersey, which is dedicated to inspiring high achievement in American schools. The Sweetwater Middle students will participate in two more WordMasters' meets during the coming months and medals and certificates will be awarded in June to those who achieve and/or improve the most in the course of the year.

More than 220,000 students from across the nation enter the competition annually.