

March 27, 2009

“JROTC Goes to Nationals”

On March 5th, the **Plano East and Plano West Senior High School JROTC Academic Teams** earned **1st and 3rd place honors respectively**, out of 198 teams/schools, in the U.S. Army JROTC 5th Brigade portion of the **2009 U.S. Army JROTC Academic and Leadership Bowl competition**. The team from Plano East will compete in Washington D.C., June 26-30, 2009.

The Panther JROTC Academic Team is comprised of two Plano East juniors, **Zen Ren** and **James Untiedt**, and two Clark High School sophomores, **Sabryna Gibson** and **Amber VanHecke**. The two alternates were Plano East Senior cadets **Mary Walker** and **Harrison Stone**.

Competition questions are based on the **SAT, ACT, JROTC curriculum and current events**. The test is administered jeopardy-style, via the internet, with a 30 second time limit for each question. The team members are able to quickly read, discuss, and exchange information before finalizing an answer.

Out of **1,645** Army JROTC programs, 72 teams (24 academic/48 leadership) from around the globe will compete in Level III of the 2009 U.S. Army JROTC Academic and Leadership Bowl competition, the final level of the Army JROTC Academic and Leadership Championship.

According to Major (Ret) John Napoli, Jr., who serves as the Director of Army Instruction for the Plano Independent School District, “we are proud of the academic accomplishments of all our students. This bowl is one of many ways we challenge our students on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. Our foremost priority in JROTC is to the academic and professional development of all out students. In the last two years alone our graduating seniors have earned over \$ 4.5 million in college scholarship monies.”

During the course of the Level III National Competition, the cadets and the Plano East Senior Army Instructor, LTC (R) Bernard Aikens, will stay in dorms on the campus of **George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia**. Two days will be dedicated to the Academic Bowl/Leadership Bowl, one day for a service learning project, and the last day for sightseeing around our nation’s capitol.

Panther Battalion Academic Team



From left to right: Senior Army Instructor LTC (Ret) Bernard Aikens, c/1SG Amber VanHecke, Team Commander c/1LT Zen Ren, c/SSG Sabryнна Gibson, and c/CSM James Untiedt