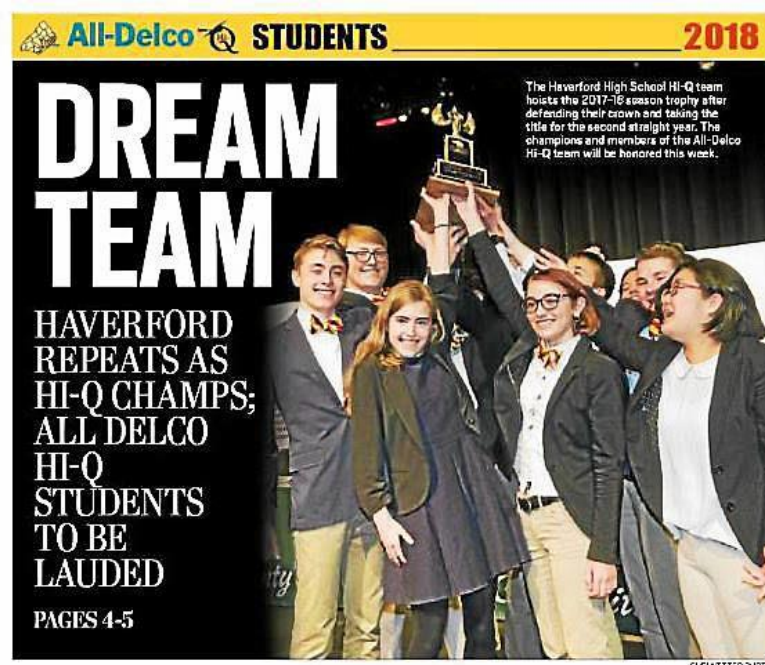


DAILY TIMES

All-Delco Hi-Q: Dream Team members talk about academic excellence

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The Haverford High School Hi-Q team hoists the 2017-18 season trophy.

- Phil Heron
- Digital First Media

Celebrating its 70th season in the 2017-18 school year, Hi-Q embodies many of the changes and constants that its home county has seen since Scott Paper, today Kimberly Clark, created it as a showcase for Delco's best and brightest students.

While the students on this year's championship team at Haverford High School may recognize their neighborhoods during Hi-Q's inaugural season, the communities of one challenger in the finals, Garnet Valley, were still sparsely populated farmland, and fellow finalist Delaware County Christian School's

home of Newtown Township was still known for its weekend country homes of Philadelphia businessmen rather than suburban shopping along West Chester Pike.

The competition pulled from 40-plus school districts in its early years rather than 15 today, and a different makeup of parochial and private high schools.

For the many changes to the landscape and people of Delaware County over the last 70 years, the 2017-18 All-Delco Hi-Q students still typify the hard work in academics, civics, arts and athletics that produced its many success stories.

Two All-Delco students, Penn Wood's Nadia Lartey and Haverford's Quinn Gallagher, are Ivy League-bound in the fall and on track to join the ranks of outstanding countians who came before them.

Lartey started off her senior year as a member of the All-Star team that faced off against Philadelphia-area notables in the Celebrity Hi-Q match that launches the 70th anniversary season.

"I loved the All-Star team," said Lartey. "It was different to be with people you compete against – I became friends with a couple people, and the celebrities were hilarious."

Lartey got her start in Hi-Q after attending a recruitment meeting, where she was drawn into the "fun and dynamic" atmosphere the upperclassmen presented.

During her three years on the team, Lartey has covered the sciences and humanities during competitions, including mathematics, U.S. government and history. She has used her time management skills to also cover wide range of extra-curricular activities in her time at Penn Wood.

Lartey honed her stage skills needed for Hi-Q through debating in the Pennsylvania High School Speech League. "When you debate, you read people better," she said. "You explain to the audience why something matters and how the pieces interconnect." She also learned public speaking skills as a lay reader, among other responsibilities, at St. James Church of Kingsessing in Southwest Philadelphia.

She completed college credits during high school in two dual enrollment programs. Earning a spot in Drexel University's program through standardized test scores, she completed classes in international

business, social sciences and Eastern philosophy. At Delaware County Community College, she took classes in pre-calculus and statistics, social work, criminal justice and a current events course examining the Black Lives Matter movement.

For her achievements in high school, Lartney was named both a Ron Brown Scholar, “a selective scholarship program that advances higher education for community-minded and intellectually gifted African Americans,” and a Hortio Alger State Scholar, a program that “specifically assists high school students who have faced and overcome great obstacles in their young lives,” according to their respective foundations.

Lartney will attend Yale University in the fall and continue her interest in both math and the humanities. “I plan to double major in Latin American studies and mathematics. I’m not sure yet career-wise,” she said.

Regardless of where her career path takes her, she will continue to apply lessons from Hi-Q and the pride and honor of being named All-Delco by her school. “If you’re only going in for yourself, there’s no way to win. Hi-Q makes you all support each other, which it’s something I’ll continue to do.”

Quinn Gallagher started on the path to Hi-Q after seeing a meet freshman year. “It was glorifying academic skill in a way I’d never seen before,” he said. “You can go to a football and see athletic ability – seeing the smartest kids on stage drew me in. I went on for the team the end of freshmen year and ended up making it.”

Gallagher served as a co-captain senior year, making sure members stuck to the team study strategies that included dividing the wide subjects of American history and literature across the team, then assigning remaining subjects to where members’ interests lie.

“I was a science kid so I took on physics,” he said. “I like government and covered that. It’s a combination of what needs to be done and from there what are your interests.”

Hi-Q gave Gallagher the chance to delve into his academic interests beyond class curriculums. “I had AP physics this year, and Hi-Q gave me a lot of the groundwork I needed. I had taken AP chemistry and then

did chemistry for Hi-Q. There was a lot of interesting stuff in the Hi-Q materials that we didn't talk about in AP chem."

His aptitude in chemistry earned him a spot in the National Chemistry Olympiad finals at LaSalle University, although his expectations of meeting prodigies who could push him to raise his own game did not match reality. After being given goals and materials but no instructions on how to complete the experiment, he found himself "just sitting there mixing stuff together to see what would happen." "I thought I was going to be surrounded by all these geniuses, but the guy next to me and across from me were in the same boat," he said. "It was a funny experience, and a learning experience to reflect on."

Outside of academics, Gallagher pursued his love of competition through varsity soccer and Ultimate Frisbee. One highlight of his high school years came outside of Haverford through the Delaware County Youth Orchestra. "I've played clarinet since fourth grade, and that was an outlet to still be involved in music," he said. "Playing in an orchestra is one of the best experiences you can have, with everyone in tune on a passage and focusing on one thing."

Gallagher will continue his interest in the sciences in the fall at the University of Pennsylvania, studying chemical and biomolecular engineering in the School of Engineering and Applied Science, with a possible minor in computer science.

"Chemical engineering has so many different sciences and mathematics coming together in one subject – I'm really excited to study that in college," he said.

For all the academic benefits Gallagher took away from Hi-Q, it's the social side of the competition that will stick with him as he leaves Haverford. "We won the Delco championship two years in a row and that awesome. Winning and losing is why you're there, but being with the team – people I've known since sixth grade – that's the best thing. Getting to leave school and go answer questions together, that's the highlight."