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Seton-La Salle Catholic High School

MEDIA ADVISORY

**Seton-La Salle Catholic High School Student Wins National Championship
in Academic Games in Orlando, FL.**

WHAT: **Seton-La Salle Catholic High School** student **Connor Hayes**, a junior, won 1st Place and was named the National Champion in the World Events category – Senior Division, at the Academic Games National Championship Tournament held in Orlando, FL.

WHEN: The National Tournament sponsored by the Academic Games League of America, which promotes excellence through academic competition, was held April 29 – May 2 2011 in Orlando, FL.

About the Championship **Connor Hayes**, is the son of Kevin Hayes and Maureen Kelly from Mt. Lebanon, PA. Connor first competed in the local competition, before making it to the national championship along with his teammates and fellow Seton-La Salle Catholic High School students which included :

Jon Kotek- City of Pittsburgh (National Championship Player)
Mike Brust – City of Pittsburgh (National Championship Player)
Steve Milcarek – City of Pittsburgh (Local Competition Player)
Petey Bruni –Peters Township (Local Competition Player)
Marissa Rieber - City of Pittsburgh (Local Competition Player)
Pat Dudiak – Bethel Park (Local Competition Player)
Cate Hansberry – Mt. Lebanon (Local Competition Player)
Ellie Riedel- Keystone Oaks (Local Competition Player)
Jake Grefenstette –Mt. Lebanon (Local Competition Player)
Darik O'Neal- City of Pittsburgh (Local Competition Player)

Of these eleven students, three Seton-La Salle students, **Connor Hayes, Jon Kotek** and **Mike Brust**, qualified for the National Championship in Orlando. "The thing that I most enjoyed about the trip was that I was able to meet so many new people, as well as be able to compete in an environment where I wasn't constantly worried over schoolwork," said Hayes.

The students were under the direction of Mr. Ben Schrader, a Social Studies teacher at Seton-La Salle, who served as their moderator. "I felt happy for Connor because I know how hard he works and how talented he is. I also feel a lot of pride in Seton-La Salle and I realize what a strong statement it makes about our school and our students. It is rare to produce a national champion in the 1st year of a program." "Connor submitted a dominant performance in World Events. Both Senior Mike Brust and Senior Jon Kotek fared very well, especially considering it was their first national tournament," said Schrader.

Schrader himself competed in the Academic Games when he was a student at Springdale High School, "As a high school student I played Academic Games for 7 years and attended the national tournament 7 times. I was a top-ten performer in both Propaganda and World Events," added Schrader.

Connor Hayes has been competing in the games since he was a fifth grade student at Mt. Lebanon Middle School. "Ever since I began playing the games, the World Events category was always my strong point and I wanted to do well in it. But not until this year had I done very well in the game, let alone win 1st place, so when it was announced that I had won the event, I was ecstatic that my goal for so long had finally been reached!" said Hayes.

This was the first year the Academic Games have been offered at Seton-La Salle Catholic High School. "I think our Academic Games program will continue to grow and improve. I see multiple titles in our future. My advice to the rest of Academic Games is, watch out for Seton-La Salle at the 2012 National Tournament in West Virginia," concluded Schrader.

ABOUT THE ACADEMIC GAMES: Academic Games Leagues of America (AGLOA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to developing "Thinking Kids" of character, excellence, and integrity. AGLOA provides a series of Academic Games competitions throughout the nation culminating in a National Championship Tournament in late April each year. Players compete in four Divisions, according to their grade levels: Elementary (4-6); Middle (7-8); Junior (9-10); and Senior (11-12). Participants compete in one or more of six different Academic Games events that use and develop higher order thinking skills. These are: Equations, On-sets, Linguistics, Presidents, Propaganda and World Events. Since 1966, over 20,000 students have attended the National tournament; over 100,000 have competed in local Academic Games

matches.

The team members were graciously sponsored by The Kotek Family, The Pikras Family, The Hansberry Family, Seton-La Salle Catholic High School, Mike Hesidence from AAA Automotive in Bethel Park, PA and the Seton-La Salle Class of 2011.

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