



U.S. NATIONAL CHEMISTRY OLYMPIAD
To
High School Chemistry Teachers

Dear Chemistry Teacher and Colleague,

As chair and coordinator of the Chemistry Olympiad, Maryland Section of the American Chemical Society (ACS), I am pleased to announce that we will be participating this year in the U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO). The primary goals of this program are to stimulate interest and achievement in chemistry among high school students throughout the United States and to provide recognition of outstanding young chemistry students, teachers, and schools.

Students competing in the USNCO are eligible to be selected as members of the United States team for the International Chemistry Olympiad (IChO). For more than thirty years, the United States has sent a team of four students to compete with nations around the world at the IChO. The students participate in both theoretical and laboratory examinations over several days. Gold, Silver, and Bronze medals are awarded to the best performers, and the IChO provides students the opportunity to interact with their peers from other countries. In the past years, the Team USA has won several gold and silver medals at the IChO in Hanoi (Vietnam), Baku (Azerbaijan), Tbilisi (Georgia) and many other countries with exotic cities. The [event takes place](#) in mid-July of each year.

My immediate task is to encourage you and your students to participate in this program. **The identification of the four-member U.S. team begins at the local school system level.** It is the responsibility of the Maryland section to nominate students from this area to take the USNCO national examination. In order to identify these students, we have decided to conduct a preliminary screening of students through:

MARYLAND LOCAL CHEMISTRY OLYMPIAD RULES:

1. **Send an application** by mail and/or online to Maryland Coordinator
Use the form found in the Maryland Section official site: www.maryland.sites.acs.org or in [USNCO Maryland Local Section](#).
2. **Comply with requisites, requirements, documentation and rules** from ACS Maryland Local Section, USNCO and the IChO rules. Use any of the following websites for the National exam www.acs.org (select *education, high school, then chemistry Olympiad, rules*) or www.acs.org/olympiad or use [USNCO Maryland Local Section](#) for the Local Section exam (pre-qualifying exam: these rules 1-5 in this letter).
3. A **letter of recommendation from the school chemistry teacher emphasizing the student's academic ability in chemistry and his/her commitment to the competition.** This letter is required for all nominees to the national competition. Teachers may want to wait until your

students qualify for the National exam. This requirement has been changed to alleviate the burden of writing three or more letters of recommendation at the beginning of the competition. **The letter should be written in the appropriate school's letterhead and be directed** to current Maryland Chemistry Olympiad Coordinator, Maryland Section, ACS (use regular mail or send it online in PDF)

4. **Participate in the pre-qualification Local Competition** in March at the place and date designed by the teacher and the USNCO coordinator. This exam will be sent only to the participant schools after the coordinator receives the application or registration form from each participant student. The Local Section Coordinator will nominate students to the USNCO exam based on 1. Student's local exam performance, 2. Date and completion of requirements and recommendation letter (in case there are several students from the same school with equal grade). Only two students from the same school are allowed to participate in the National exam, in the case there are more students with higher scores and belong to two educational establishments such as an academy (national preparatory examination school) and a high school at the same time they have an opportunity if they change their school representation.
5. Participate in the **U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad** competition at Notre Dame of Maryland University in April (date TBA by ACS headquarters).
6. Nominees to USNCO will be announced 1-2 days after March 31st. They will be contacted by mail and a copy will be sent to his/her teacher sponsor. Nominees need to complete requirements: **letter of recommendation** and **personal release form** (the photo release document will be in the [USNCO Maryland Local Section](#) website).

I encourage your school to participate in this academic Olympiad. All students who participate will be recognized and presented with a certificate; the top 150 students (of 1300 nationwide) will receive recognition for outstanding performance at the national level. We hope this recognition will serve to stimulate interest in chemistry and to promote a positive attitude toward chemistry.

I, Beatrice Salazar have been appointed the USNCO Coordinator for this area. I encourage you to enter students from your school in this competition by completing and returning the registration form before the 5th of March. Thank you for helping promote chemical education in this country.

Sincerely,



Chair, US Chemistry Olympiad, USNCO, Coordinator
Maryland Section, ACS

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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