

Damascus American Legion Contestant Wins State Oratorical Title

Sponsored by Damascus Post 171 and the Legion Southern Maryland District, Clarksburg High School Junior Srivatsaan “Sri” Kalpana Sreenivasan won first place in the Department of Maryland’s High School Oratorical Contest on Sunday, March 7th. The contest was hosted by Towson Post 22 and included two other contestants from other Legion districts in Maryland.



Winner Sri, pictured center, is surrounded by his proud parents, Kalpana Ramasamy on his left, and Sreenivasan Shanmugam on his right. Pictured on the far left is Anthony DeShiro, First Vice Commander of Post 171, and, on the far right, is Sam LeHane, the Post’s Chairman of the Oratorical Contest.

Sri’s oration was titled “The Importance of Voting, a very timely and relevant subject this year. Since it’s inception in 1938, the theme of The American Legion Oratorical Contest has been The United States Constitution. The contest is designed to enhance understanding and appreciation of our Constitution among our young citizens. Contestants are required to create an original speech related to the Constitution which must be memorized and delivered in 8-10 minutes. In addition, they must be prepared to deliver an oration about one of four topics chosen randomly and delivered without notes in 3-5 minutes. Sri was the very happy winner of \$8000 in scholarship money, \$5000 from the National American Legion and \$3000 from the Department of Maryland in addition to the amounts he won at the Post, Montgomery County, and District levels. He will be eligible to compete again in his senior year, 2021-2022.

Story by George Bolling, PPC; Photograph courtesy of Dave Clemmer, PPC