

Damascus American Legion contestant wins district oratorical contest



For the second year in a row, Srivatsaan "Sri" Kalpana Sreenivasan will compete for the Maryland State title in the American Legion Department of Maryland Oratorical Contest on March 7. Pictured second from left, Sri, a junior at Clarksburg High School sponsored by Damascus Post 171, won the Southern Maryland District contest held at Clinton Post on Feb. 20. The title of his oration was "The Importance Of Voting," a very relevant topic related to the Constitution, the central theme of the National American Legion contest. Second place went to Lilanna Covarrubias (second from right), a freshman at West Lake High School in Waldorf, who was sponsored by the Calvert County American Legion Council. Lilanna's topic was "The Constitution: Our Origami Crane," a theme creatively related to an art project she had done. The American Legion has sponsored the annual National High School Oratorical Contest

since 1938, a program designed to to enhance understanding and appreciation of the United States Constitution. The contest begins at the local community Post level and entails meeting stringent requirements. Each contestant must create an original 8-10 minute oration related to the Constitution and commit it to memory. In addition, the contestants must be prepared to speak for 3-5 minutes on four selected Constitutional topics which also be memorized. Also pictured on the far left is William Trotter of the Damascus Post, vice commander of the Department of Maryland American Legion. On the far right is Sam Lehane, the Damascus Post Oratorical Contest chairman. This year, due to the pandemic, the national contest has been suspended. Instead, each state winner will receive \$5,000 in scholarship money.

Photo by Damascus Legionnaire Anita Trotter