

# SUCCESS at STATE

UIL teams compete at highest level at UT campus in Austin

With nine state competitors, White Oak's UIL academic teams and individuals earned 57 points overall on May 23 and 24 at the UIL State academic meet at the University of Texas at Austin campus.

"I couldn't be more proud of our students and coaches that represented White Oak at the state meet," **Principal Dan Noll** said "They out worked the rest of the state and they deserve the benefits that come along with that. They continued the tradition of keeping White Oak great."

The Literary Criticism team won second place as a team and **Kathryn Shuttlesworth** [12] placed fifth individually.

"My favorite part of Lit Crit was the camaraderie that comes with being on the team," Shuttlesworth said. "I got an entire set of friends and amazing memories from Lit Crit that I'll be eternally grateful."

The whole team for Literary Criticism consisted of **Hayleah Powell** [12], **Hanna Paine** [11], **Brendan Andrews** [10] and Shuttlesworth and their sponsor **Karen Wiersig**.

"We practice every day in enrichment and about three hours on Tuesday evenings," Andrews said. "I've always had a thing for literature and I felt like this

was a really good way to put my aptitude to good use."

**Sam Reynolds** [10] also advanced to state UIL in Social Studies.

"I joined this year because I was intrigued by the Social Studies topic, which covered World War I," Reynolds said. "My goal for next year is to push my team so we can all make it to state."

The journalism competitors placed first as a team. In headline writing, **Isaac Rodriguez** [11] placed third and **Cade Gilbreath** [11] fifth.

"Last year, I placed fourth. Naturally, my goal was to place better than I did," Rodriguez said. "I put a lot of pressure on myself to do it, but ultimately I achieved my goal."

In editorial writing, **Cade Palmer** [12] took second place and **Mackenzie Brown** [10] took fourth.

"The kids did what they needed to do to take care of business," journalism adviser **Karen Cook** said.

"There was a lot of pressure to bring home a fifth consecutive state championship and they rose to the occasion."

Blowing off steam after a long, stressful day of competition, the Lit Crit team goofs around with their medals. "The medal tasted similar to the taste of victory with a dash of sweat, with a light hint of blood and tears as well," Andrews said. "We were mildly disappointed with second, but we took comfort in the fact that we performed better than almost everyone else."



After receiving their medals at the awards ceremony, the journalism team poses for a photo with their new awards. The competitors were given a choice to know their places before the award ceremony. They all agreed to get the results after verification.



"Everything was easy except the hiccup story. I felt confident after the test that I did well." **Carson West** [3]

# CLOSE Calls Journalism team overcomes obstacles to claim title

Over the course of the two day, one night trip, there were two situations where the Journalism team encountered threats to their well-being. First, the fire alarm in the hotel blared and dialogue over a loudspeaker said, "There is an emergency situation on your floor. Please exit immediately." Cade Palmer and Cade Gilbreath instantly sprinted out of the room, leaving the door wide open and Isaac Rodriguez, Karen Cook and Mackenzie Brown left for dead in the rooms. About 45 seconds later, Rodriguez stumbled out of the room. As he made his way to the stairs, a hotel employee notified him that it was a false alarm. A woman managed to set off the alarm with a hair dryer.

The second close call was on the drive home when a deer ran in front of the school's Chevrolet Traverse on Highway 80 in Gladewater. It was around two a.m. and everyone was ready to get home, so the team didn't stop to check on it.

Despite the late night hairdryer incident and attack by Bambi's mom, the team returned home with their fifth consecutive state championship.

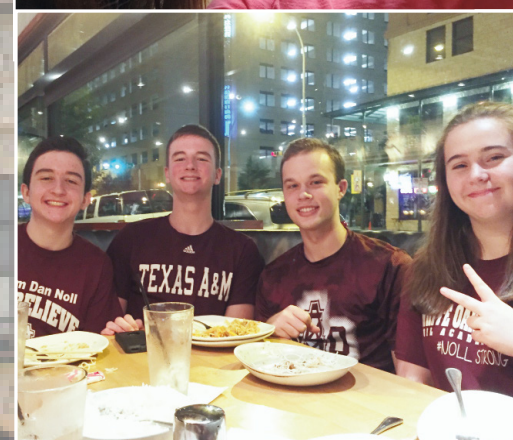


The journalism team inspects the damage done to the school vehicle after hitting a deer in Gladewater on their way home. The lower headlight on the car was smashed, and Cade Gilbreath [11] found tufts of deer hair stuck in the socket of the light and the cracked plastic exterior of the vehicle. "We all felt the car jerk violently, and everyone who was sleeping woke up," Palmer said. "Ms. Cook didn't even slow down. We were all ready to be finished with the drive, and no deer was going to keep us from our own warm beds at home."



The view the courtyard from the balcony outside their room the day before the competition. The state qualifiers stayed in the Hilton Hotel, considered a step up from the Rodeway Inn the students stayed in at regionals. "The state hotel was definitely a step up from the regionals hotel." Cook said. "The regionals hotel was like the Bates Motel."

Taking a break at the hotel after the five hour drive to Austin, Rodriguez and Palmer participate in a heated game of Uno. The journalism team had some free time while they waited for their rooms, so they explored the lobby and took advantage of the hotel's free refreshments.



Displaying their awards proudly, the Literary Criticism team smiles for the camera following the awards ceremony. The team placed second as a whole, and Shuttlesworth placed fifth individually. "The hard work was worth it. Getting second place was a great accomplishment for us," Shuttlesworth said. "Just the camaraderie alone made us feel enough support to do our best, and gave us ease to do what we love and meet our goals."

Celebrating their individual victories and their first place state championship as a team, UIL journalism competitors Rodriguez, Gilbreath, Palmer, and Brown sit down at P. F. Chang's and enjoy a meal. The journalism team chose to stop and eat a good meal to celebrate, despite the fact that it pushed their arrival time back at home even later. "P. F. Chang's was a great way to celebrate after state," Brown said. "We didn't eat much real food while at contest, so a full meal at the end of the long day was perfect."

"I felt excited because it's my first test and you don't know if you are going to do good but you know you are going to do your best." **Christiana Nope** [3]

"At the beginning of the test I was scared and I didn't want to do it but at the end my mom took me out so that was good." **Makayla Kerr** [3]

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Moments of Anxiety:

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