

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 18, 2025**

**HCPS Envirothon Team Wins State Competition for Third Year in a Row**  
*North Harford High School Envirothon Team Advances to International Competition*

For the third year in a row, North Harford High School’s Envirothon Team won the Maryland Envirothon, showcasing their strength in environmental knowledge, teamwork, and critical thinking. This year, the event was held June 11–12, 2025, at the Western Maryland 4-H Park in Swanton, Maryland. Teams from across the state competed in five challenges focused on soil, aquatics, forestry, wildlife, and this year’s fifth issue topic: *Roots and Resiliency – Fostering Forest Stewardship in a Canopy of Change*.

This year’s winning team, composed of Frank DeLuca, Jacob Jestel, Jonathan VanBuskirk, Ryan Layman, and Samantha Hawk, earned first place overall after two days of written tests, fieldwork, and a final oral presentation. Frank DeLuca has been on all three state championship teams, and Jonathan VanBuskirk was part of the winning team in 2025. All five students demonstrated advanced environmental literacy and the ability to apply science to real-world issues.

“It’s inspiring to see the passion these students bring to their work, and I am very proud of what they’ve been able to accomplish,” said team coach and North Harford High School teacher Laura O’Leary. “They care deeply about the environment and each other. Their success is a result of the time they’ve invested studying after school, practicing in the field, and pushing themselves to grow as scientists and as a team.”

The North Harford team will represent Maryland at the 2025 NCF-Envirothon, held July 20–26, 2025, at Mount Royal University in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

“The consistency and excellence we’re seeing from these students is truly exceptional. To win at this level for three consecutive years is an incredible accomplishment,” said Superintendent Dr. Sean Bulson. “Harford County has a rich history of agriculture and agricultural education, and it’s exciting to see that tradition carried forward. These students reflect the values, knowledge, and commitment to stewardship that define our community. We are extremely proud of the entire team.”

Envirothon, locally supported for more than 30 years by the Harford Soil Conservation District, offers high school students the opportunity to explore natural resource management and environmental science in a hands-on, competitive format. Students build deep subject knowledge while developing critical skills in collaboration, leadership, and problem-solving—preparing them for future success as stewards of the environment.

###