



NEWS RELEASE

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Virtual Symposium showcases yearlong independent research by BCPS high school students

Features presentations by students from 7 high schools

Towson, MD – The public is invited to view the multimedia [Baltimore County Public Schools Virtual Symposium](#), which showcases the results of original research conducted by 16 students during the 2020-21 school year.

The students from Catonsville, Franklin, Hereford, Parkville, Perry Hall, and Pikesville high schools, and Western School of Technology participated in the Independent Research Seminar elective course this year. This year's Virtual Symposium is the ninth annual BCPS Independent Research Symposium.

“These incredible students show tenacity, grit, and determination as they spend a semester or a year investigating topics that are of interest to them,” said Fran Glick, coordinator of BCPS library media programs. “They work with teachers, experts in the field, and fellow students to refine their learning and to create the incredible artifacts that you will explore. We are always incredibly proud of our students. Our thanks go to the incredible teachers and library media specialists who support their students and enable them to be successful in these topics. Their guidance and commitment to students is equally celebrated.”

“As impressive as the work of these students is,” said BCPS Superintendent Dr. Darryl L. Williams, “I am equally impressed by the diversity of their interests – from fashion to race, from solar energy to mental health. The work these students have created is worthy of our consideration. The experience they have had this year, taking such a self-directed, deep dive into their areas of interest, is rare and invaluable.”

The 2021 Independent Research Seminar students and their research topics are:

Catonsville High School

- **Paulina Alern**, Grade 11, “The Environmental Impacts of Photographic Chemistry”
- **Ivy Hammett-Aron**, Grade 12, “Evolution of Corsets through the Nineteenth Century”

- **Kim Lek**, Grade 12, “Chanel: How can the influence of a person’s idea change the course of women’s fashion?”
- **Hazel Montgomery-Walsh**, Grade 12, “What are the interstices between climate change, ethics, and the displacement of people, and how can we address the causal relationship between them?”
- **Nusrat Tusi**, Grade 12, “Modern Day Segregation: The Everlasting Effects of Discriminatory Public Policy”
- **Bethlehem Wolde**, Grade 12, “Classrooms and Courtrooms: Black Students' Silent Suffering”

Franklin High School

- **Max Harris**, Grade 12, “Harnessing Solar Energy with a Solar-Satellite Constellation”

Hereford High School

- **Annabella Gonzalez**, Grade 12, “The Implications of White Male Suicides within the United States”

Parkville High School

- **Oscar McDonough**, Grade 12, “Why should the anti-hero’s journey be used more in film?”

Perry Hall High School

- **Andy Lu**, Grade 12, “Student Perception of Learning During COVID-19”
- **Allison Morrow**, Grade 12, “Polar Bear Portrayal and Its Effect on Monetary Donations”
- **Sydney-Ariel Muneses**, Grade 12, “The Influence of Diasporic Identities on Asian-American Mental Health”
- **Haris Muzaffar**, Grade 12, “Study on How Online Communication Can Impact Mental Health”

Pikesville High School

- **Olivia Clay**, Grade 12, “Teen Girls and Romantic Comedies”

Western School of Technology

- **Chinwe Kalu**, Grade 11, “Systemic Racism and Public Health: A Look at the Effects of Health Disparities and Pollution Exposure on Black Americans”
- **Kayla Wood**, Grade 12, “The Risks of Multi-Level Marketing”

The student researchers worked collaboratively and independently under the guidance of their library media specialists, faculty advisors, and expert mentors. Students used the process and resources provided in an online [research framework](#) to generate a research question, conduct a literature review, write a research proposal, and synthesize their findings to create a presentation for an audience.

High school administrators, counselors, and library media specialists interested in offering the Independent Research Seminar at their schools will find [implementation resources](#) online.

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[Baltimore County Public Schools](#), the nation’s 25th largest school system, is focused on raising the bar and closing gaps to prepare our students for the future. Thanks to innovative and talented leaders, teachers, staff, and students, BCPS celebrates [many honors](#).