

USNCO Webinar “Applying to College as a USNCO Participant”

Fact sheet for students completing college applications.

- The United States National Chemistry Olympiad (USNCO) is a program of the American Chemical Society (ACS), the nation's leading association of researchers, educators, and students in the field of chemistry.
- Each year in March, more than 10,000 high school students take the USNCO Local Examination, which is proctored by around 150 ACS Local Sections and ACS International Sciences Chapters.
- To successfully compete students must undergo a rigorous preparation involving extended study time, practice in the laboratory and studying advanced topics, as the material covered by USNCO exams is much broader than an average HS chemistry course, including many AP or Honors chemistry courses. Students who successfully competed in USNCO have developed great time management skills, are self-motivated, determined, detail oriented and excellent problem solvers.
- Based on the results of local examination, up to two students from each high school and about 1,000 students in total advance to the three-part National Exam, which is proctored in April by ACS members, typically at a local university. The top ~50 students on the National Exam are awarded USNCO High Honors and the following top ~100 students are awarded USNCO Honors. The list is published every year at the USNCO website www.acs.org/Olympiad
- The 20 top-scoring students from the National Exam are invited to spend two weeks at a residential USNCO Study Camp hosted by the Chemistry and Biochemistry Department of University of Maryland College Park university in June to undergo rigorous additional training in the theoretical and practical elements of chemistry.
- In July, the top four students from the Study Camp travel to represent the United States at the International Chemistry Olympiad, the world's oldest, largest, and most prestigious international chemistry competition for secondary school students, where they spend two days solving challenging theoretical and experimental examinations designed by leading chemists and the remaining time exploring the host country and meeting students from other participating countries. Results from all ~80 countries are published annually at icho-official.org/results.
- The USNCO publishes the names, high schools, and local chapter affiliations of students who earned High Honors and Honors, as well as those who attended the Study Camp or qualified for the IChO travel team, on our website at <http://acs.org/olympiad>. There, you can also find information on rules and eligibility for the competition, as well as copies of past examinations at various levels of the competition if you or your faculty wish to learn more about the kind of rigorous and challenging content that USNCO contestants have mastered.
- Many students who participate in the USNCO program proceed to earn degrees in chemistry and chemical sciences, receive PhD degrees and have fulfilling careers in academia and industry.