

Bay Area Well Represented on All-America Team!

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by Michael Aigner

According to this [press release](#) by the US Chess Federation, **eight CalChess stars earned a spot on the 2010 All-America Chess Team** sponsored by [Trophies Plus!](#) The requirements for this prestigious honor are quite strict: players must exceed a very high rating depending on their age (*ranging from 1800 for age 8 & under to 2450 for age 18*). Only 43 juniors made the team--an average of merely four per age group.

Kudos to the following [CalChess](#) kids! Readers of this blog are already familiar with the names, and now folks around the country will recognize them as well.

FM Naroditsky presents a lecture

[Bay Area juniors on All-America Team \(age as of January 1\)](#).

- IM Sam Shankland (17)
- FM Steven Zierk (15)
- FM Daniel Naroditsky (13)
- NM Greg Young (13)
- NM Yian Liou (11)
- Samuel Sevian (8)
- Cameron Wheeler (8)
- Tanuj Vasudeva (7)

The All-America team highlights a fact that Bay Area coaches have known for several years: the *local kids can compete with those from the scholastic hotbeds of New York and Texas!* **With eight All-Americans, CalChess narrowly edged New York and Texas, both with seven.** No other state has more than four.

The Bay Area has become a prime breeding ground for the nation's elite kids, sharing the role that New York dominated for many years. Much of the **credit goes to the [Mechanics' Institute](#) for fostering an environment that motivates kids.** [Regular tournaments](#) offer the rising stars a chance to match wits with experienced adult masters and experts, while the [San Francisco School of Chess](#) hosts lectures by experienced Grandmasters from around the world. A final factor is that [Silicon Valley](#) kids tend to become comfortable with computers at a young age; I have watched kids as young as 5 and 6 playing chess on [ICC!](#)