



PRESS RELEASE

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64 Poway Unified Students Named Semi-Finalists in 2020 National Merit Scholarship Program

Officials of National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) announced the names of approximately 16,000 semifinalists in the 65th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. The Poway Unified School District (PUSD) is pleased to announce that students from Del Norte, Mt. Carmel, Poway, Rancho Bernardo, and Westview High Schools were named as part of this group.

Del Norte HS: Ayesha Aslam-Mir, Priyanka Babu, Mansi Basmatkar, Arushi Dogra, Julia Du, Sravani Duggirala, Ellie Feng, Lucy Gao, Hazelle Gunawan, Vivian Huynh, Michael Iter, Kyle Ke, Priya Khandelwal, Rupin Mittal, Nora Mousa, John Nienstedt, Chan Park, Pranav Patil, Nabeel Shahid, Andrew Stratton, Keerthana Sundar, Pranac Thokachichu, Manasvi Vora, Andrew Wang, Brandon Wang, Skyler Wu, Helen Xu, Evan Zhou

Mt. Carmel HS: Kendra Gregg, Isaiah Kim

Poway HS: Katherine Downs, Nicholas Middelberg, Diego Rios Brady, Joseph Salamy, and Christine Wakayama.

Rancho Bernardo HS: Sanica Chaudhari, Victoria Dinov, Sakina Rashid, Sandy Tran, Daniel Zeng

Westview HS: Richard Chen, Sauhaarda Chowdhuri, Nabeen Chu, Brandon Ho, David Huang, Sabrina Jiang, Daniel Jung, Elise Kim, Jeffrey Liu, Jiajun Lu, Carina Luo, Raghav Mehndiratta, Ethan Olim, Daniel Ryu, Shahr Schwartz, Junu Song, Rohan Venkateswaran, Andrea Wang, Arav Watwani, Leon Wu, William Xia, Danqi Zhang, Steven Zhang, William Zou

These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,600 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$31 million that will be offered next spring.

Steps Taken in the Competition

Over 1.5 million high school juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2020 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2018 preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which serves as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state. The number of semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors.

To become a finalist, the semifinalist and a high school official must submit a detailed scholarship application, in which they provide information about the semifinalist's academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. A semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT® or ACT® scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test.

All finalists will be selected in February 2020, and the National Merit Scholarship Winners will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning in April 2020.

Background

NMSC, a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, was established in 1955 specifically to conduct the annual National Merit Scholarship Program. Scholarships are underwritten by NMSC with its own funds and by approximately 400 business organizations and higher education institutions that share NMSC's goals of honoring the nation's scholastic champions and encouraging the pursuit of academic excellence.

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