



NATIONAL MERIT® SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS May 28, 2008 Announcement

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Note: This press release was distributed to news media on May 22 with a list of National Merit College-sponsored Scholarship winners to encourage public recognition of these outstanding students. The release is made available here to provide information about these Merit Scholarship® awards; however, the names of award recipients are not posted on this Web site.

Today's announcement is the third National Merit Scholar release in 2008 by National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). NMSC named recipients of corporate-sponsored awards on April 16 and winners of National Merit® \$2500 Scholarships on April 30. Additional recipients of college-sponsored awards will be announced on July 14. By the conclusion of this year's competition, some 8,200 academic champions will have won National Merit Scholarships worth \$36 million.

College-sponsored Merit Scholarship Winners Named

(Evanston, Illinois) More than 2,800 winners of National Merit Scholarships financed by colleges and universities were announced today by National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). Officials of each sponsor college selected their scholarship winners from among Finalists in the 2008 National Merit Scholarship Program who plan to attend their institution. These awards provide between \$500 and \$2,000 annually for up to four years of undergraduate study at the institution financing the scholarship. Another group of Scholars will be announced in July, bringing the total number of college-sponsored Merit Scholarship recipients in the 2008 competition to about 4,600.

This year 194 higher education institutions are underwriting Merit Scholarship awards through the National Merit Program. Sponsor colleges and universities include 115 private and 79 public institutions located in 43 states and the District of Columbia.

Today's winners are among approximately 8,200 distinguished high school seniors of 2008 who will receive National Merit Scholarships worth \$36 million for college undergraduate study. Announced earlier this spring were winners of two other types of National Merit Scholarships—corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards and National Merit \$2500 Scholarships.

2008 National Merit Scholarship Competition

More than 1.4 million juniors in over 21,000 high schools entered the 2008 National Merit Scholarship competition when they took the 2006 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT[®]), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. Last fall, some 16,000 Semifinalists were named on a state representational basis, in numbers proportional to each state's percentage of the nation's high school graduating seniors. Semifinalists were the highest scoring program entrants in each state and represented less than one percent of a state's seniors.

To advance to the Finalist level of the competition, Semifinalists had to submit a substantial amount of information and fulfill additional requirements. Each Finalist presented an outstanding academic record; was endorsed and recommended by a school official; earned SAT scores that confirmed the qualifying test performance; and provided an essay describing activities, interests, and goals. About 15,000 Semifinalists met requirements for Finalist standing, and more than half of this group will be Merit Scholarship winners in 2008.

Established in 1955 to conduct the National Merit Program, NMSC is a not-for-profit corporation, which operates without government assistance. The majority of National Merit Scholarships provided each year are made possible by the support of approximately 500 independent corporate and college sponsors. These sponsors join NMSC in its efforts to enhance educational opportunities for America's scholastically talented youth and to encourage the pursuit of academic excellence.

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CAUTION: Any attempt to compare high schools on the basis of numbers of Merit Scholarship winners will lead to erroneous and unsound conclusions. The National Merit Program honors *individual* students who show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. The program does not measure the quality or effectiveness of education within a school, system, or state.