

**72 HISD students named National Merit semifinalists***Students will have opportunity to compete for more than $32 million in scholarships*

*Sept. 29, 2017* – Seventy-two seniors from six Houston Independent School District high schools have qualified as semifinalists in the 63rdannual National Merit Scholarship Program, earning one of the top academic honors in the nation. HISD had 51 semifinalists last year.

The students are among 16,000 from across the country to earn the semifinalist designation, allowing them the opportunity to continue in the academic competition and vie for more than $32 million in scholarships that will be awarded in the spring.

The students attend Bellaire, Carnegie Vanguard, Lamar, and Westside high schools, as well as DeBakey High School for Health Professions and the High School for Performing and Visual Arts.

“Being recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Program is one of the highest academic honors that our students can receive,” HISD Superintendent Richard Carranza said.  “I am so proud to see so many of our students on this list.  It just goes to show we’re producing true Global Graduates.”

The National Merit Scholarship Program provides college scholarships to academically talented U.S. high school students who score well on the Preliminary SAT. Scholarships are provided to students from each state who have the strongest combination of accomplishments, skills, and potential for college success.

About 1.6 million juniors from more than 22,000 high schools across the country took the 2016 Preliminary SAT, which serves as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. Fewer than one percent — or about 16,000 students — were named as semifinalists.

About 15,000 students are expected to advance to the finalist level in February. About half of the finalists are expected to go on to earn a National Merit Scholarship and the official National Merit Scholar designation.

National Merit Scholars are chosen based on their skills, accomplishments, and potential for success in college.

**Bellaire High School**
Robert A. Brown
Rachel M. Contello
Eric J. Dai
Daniel P. Entchev

Evan Y. Han
Alexander J. Ho
Jasmine L. Huant
Wendy Jin
Patrick M. Kelly
Tirtha M. Kharel
Christopher I. Levitt
Michelle M. Lin

Ruth Ling
Sara E. Macia
Skylar N. McAuliffe
Alexander K. Nguyen
Gabrielle D. Olinger
Emily Y. Pan
Charlotte M. Parsons
Mackenzie L. Parsons
Rebecca C. Parsons
Emily P. Richards
Pavan A. Shukla
Kabir Sood
Samantha L. Su
Elizabeth R. Szafranski
Jacob M. Tate
Omar Uraimov
Sarah J. Wen
Scott S. Williams
Jingyi Xin
Anna C. Xu
Jennifer Xu
Yuanchen Yuan
Julia J. Zheng
Geoffrey W. Zimmerman

**Carnegie Vanguard High School**Cassandra L. Bailey
Kartik Devashish
Amanda H. Feldman
Garrett M. Holmes
Caitlin Hsu
Anuj K. Jajoo
Raymond J. Jessup
Hee Soo Jung
Rukmini Kalamangalam

Matthew J. Karam
Riordan K. Keneally
Griffin R. Khosla
Samuel W. Liu
An K. Nguyen
Ifeoluwani E. Omidiran
Katherine F. Powers
Keshav S. Srivaths

**DeBakey High School for Health Professions**Sidharth N. Belaguli
Elif Naz Kilicarslan
Aishwarya S. Kotha
William T. Mo
Vijay Nitturi
Eric Ou
Jacqueline D. Pham
Vera M. Schroeder

Brian Xue

Mason A. Yeh

Larry W. Zhang

**High School for the Performing and Visual Arts**

Trevor Z. Fu
Tuesday B. Haynes

Jonathan J. Jalbert

Caroline E. O’Connor

**Lamar High School**
Camile R. Calabrese
Jiayuan Han

**Westside High School**

Hsin-Wei “Derek” Chen
Sarah G. Hudson