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**Eight HISD Students Named National Achievement Scholarship Semifinalists**

*September 25, 2013* – Eight seniors from seven high schools throughout the Houston Independent School District have qualified as semifinalists in the prestigious National Achievement Scholarship Program.

 The National Achievement Scholarship Program is a privately funded academic competition created in 1964 to recognize and provide scholarships to academically promising African-American students across the country. It is conducted by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation and works in concert with the National Merit Scholarship Program.

 The HISD students are among 1,600 from across the country to be named National Achievement Semifinalists, a designation that allows them to continue in the competition for about 800 scholarships worth roughly $2.5 million.

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

“We’re incredibly proud of these students and the academic success they have achieved,” HISD Superintendent Terry Grier said. “The National Achievement Scholarship Program is a prestigious and storied competition, and it’s an honor for our students to be recognized by the program.”

The semifinalists were selected from a nationwide pool of more than 160,000 high school juniors who requested consideration by the National Achievement Scholarship Program when taking the 2012 Preliminary SAT, which serves as the qualifying test.

Of the 1,600 semifinalists, about 1,300 are expected to advance to the finalist level in January. To do so, they must write an essay, score well on the SAT, have an outstanding high school academic record and obtain a recommendation from a high school official.

Achievement Scholarships will be awarded to finalists based on their abilities, accomplishments and potential for success in rigorous college studies.

**National Achievement Scholarship Semifinalists**

**Bellaire High School**

Victoria M. Prince

**Carnegie Vanguard High School**

Uzondu C. Okoro

**Lamar High School**

Ademali G. Sengal

**Westside High School**

Nyanna L. Arana

**Challenge Early College High School**

Isaac C. Ibeabuchi

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

Willow N. Curry

**DeBakey High School for Health Professions**

Mary N. Chukwu

Truth Iyiewuare

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The **Houston Independent School District** is the largest school district in Texas and the seventh-largest in the United States with 282 schools and nearly 210,000 students. The 334-square-mile district is one of the largest employers in the Houston metropolitan area with more than 25,000 employees.
**For more information, visit the HISD Web site at** [**www.houstonisd.org**](http://www.houstonisd.org/)**.**

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