

HISD PRESS RELEASE

Three HISD students receive prestigious National Merit Scholarship awards

April 24, 2020 – Three Houston Independent School District students have received National Merit Scholarship awards, one of the nation’s most competitive academic honors for graduating high school seniors.

Two of the students attend Bellaire High School and one attends Westside High School. They are among 1,000 distinguished high school seniors who have won corporate-sponsored National Merit Scholarship awards financed by about 160 corporations, company foundations, and other business organizations.

The students are:

Bellaire High School

Lucy Ding

Probable career field: Economics

Corporate Scholarship Sponsor: Occidental Petroleum Charitable Foundation

Yuanjing Yuan

Probable career field: Computer Science

Corporate Scholarship Sponsor: National Oilwell Varco

Westside High School

Yasin Y. Hamed

Probable career field: Mechanical Engineering

Corporate Scholarship Sponsor: Solvay

“This is a great honor for these high-achieving HISD scholars and we congratulate them on their accomplishments,” HISD Interim Superintendent Grenita Lathan said. “We know these global graduates will continue to shine throughout their academic journeys at the colleges and universities of their choice.”

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) does not disclose the amounts of individual scholarships, however most of the corporate awards range from \$1,000 to \$10,000 per year and are renewable for up to four years of college undergraduate study.

Recipients can use their awards at any regionally accredited U.S. college or university of their choice.

“Lucy and Yuanjing are two of our brightest stars,” Bellaire High School Principal Michael McDonough said. “Lucy is the class salutatorian. She is enrolled in an independent studies math

class for students who have completed calculus. Yuanjing is an example of a student who sought out and took advantage of every academic opportunity HISD offers. Not only is she proficient in math and science, but she has also completed every level of Italian and German coursework.”

Westside High School Principal Peggi Stewart said her school’s National Merit Scholarship recipient is one of the most amazing students she has ever encountered.

“Yasin is truly outstanding and exudes integrity, a strong work ethic, kindness and compassion,” she said. “He has been accepted to MIT. We are certain he will continue to accomplish amazing things there.”

The three HISD seniors and their counterparts from across the nation were selected from students who advanced to the finalist level in the National Merit Scholarship competition and met criteria of their scholarship sponsors. Corporate sponsors provide awards for finalists who are children of their employees, residents of communities the company serves, or who plan to pursue college majors or careers the sponsor wishes to encourage.

The names of students who will receive corporate-sponsored awards are the first to be announced each year by the NMSC. In early May, NMSC will announce the names of students who will receive \$2,500 awards directly from their organization. In June and July, NMSC will announce the names of students who will receive college-sponsored scholarships.

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.

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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 280 schools and more than 209,772 students. The 333-square-mile district is one of the largest employers in the Houston metropolitan area, with more than 27,000 employees.

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