

HISD PRESS RELEASE

20 HISD students named National Merit Scholarship winners

July 16, 2020 – A total of 20 Houston Independent School District students from six high schools have been selected as winners of National Merit Scholarships this year with the final four recipients named this week.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) annually selects winners in three categories: awards funded by corporations-recipients were named in April, awards funded by NMSC-recipients were named in May, and awards sponsored by institutions of higher learning-the first group of recipients was named in June. The final four HISD scholarship winners are in the second and final group of recipients who won awards funded by colleges and universities.

The final student award recipients are:

Bellaire High School

- Steven Huttenbach, scholarship funded by Texas A&M University
- Justin Sun, scholarship funded by Texas A&M University
- Christopher Woodard, Scholarship funded by Northwestern University

Carnegie Vanguard High School

- Ruth Liu, scholarship funded by Texas A&M University

This year's HISD winners were seniors at Bellaire, Carnegie Vanguard, DeBakey, Energy Institute, Kinder HSPVA and Westside high schools.

"We congratulate all our 2020 National Merit Scholars for their outstanding academic performances," HISD Interim Superintendent Grenita Lathan said. "We applaud our scholars' dedication and hard work as they continue to excel in their endeavors."

Scholarship winners were required to perform well on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®) and SAT or ACT, maintain an outstanding academic record, write an essay, engage in leadership and community activities, and receive an endorsement from an official at their school.

This year a total of about 7,600 students nationwide won National Merit Scholars awards in a competition that began back in 2018 when over 1.5 million juniors at approximately 21,000 U.S. high schools took the (PSAT/NMSQT®).

Carnegie Vanguard High School graduate Ruth Liu was involved in several clubs such as linguistics, physics and robotics.

“Ruth is a role model and a true inspiration,” Principal Ramon Moss said. “She is a wonderful young lady who works hard and genuinely cares about others.”

Bellaire graduate Christopher Woodard was student body president while classmate Steven Huttenbach was the lead percussionist in the marching band. Principal Michael McDonough recalls Justin Sun was known for his numerous volunteer efforts.

“We are very proud of each of these young men,” McDonough said. “Not only were they excellent scholars at Bellaire High School, but they were also outstanding members of our community.”

The college-sponsored scholarships provide between \$500 and \$2,000 annually for up to four years of undergraduate study for students who will attend the sponsoring school.

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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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