

HISD PRESS RELEASE

National Merit Scholarship Program names 81 HISD seniors as semifinalists

Sept. 16, 2020 – The National Merit Scholarship Program has named 81 Houston Independent School District seniors as 2021 semifinalists.

The high school seniors have an opportunity to compete for approximately 7,600 scholarships worth more than \$30 million that will be offered next spring. Nationwide there are approximately 16,000 semifinalists in the 66th annual National Merit Scholarship Program.

“We are proud of our global scholars who are competing with their peers from across the nation for this prestigious academic honor,” HISD Interim Superintendent Grenita Lathan said. “We support and encourage them to maintain the level of excellence that has resulted in their semifinalist designation, despite challenges they may face in this year of flexibility.”

Click [here](#) to see the list of HISD students who are national semifinalists. They attend the following schools:

- Bellaire High School
- Carnegie Vanguard High School
- Challenge Early College High School
- Chavez High School
- DeBakey High School for Health Professions
- Energy Institute High School
- Heights High School
- Kinder HSPVA
- Lamar High School
- Westside High School

Over 1.5 million high school juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2019 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®). The nationwide pool of semifinalists includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state.

To be considered for a Merit Scholarship® award, semifinalists must advance to the finalist level of the competition. To become a finalist, semifinalists and an official at their high school must submit a detailed scholarship application that includes the student’s academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. Semifinalists must also write an essay.

All National Merit Scholarship winners will be selected from the group of finalists based on their skills, accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies, without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, or religious preference.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation was established in 1955 and is a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance.

HISD PRESS OFFICE | 713-556-6393 | PressOffice@HoustonISD.org | HoustonISD.org/HISDmedia

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.

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 4400 West 18th Street | Houston, Texas 77092-8501
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