College-Sponsored Merit Scholarship Winners

(Evanston, Illinois) Today, National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) announced over 3,500 winners of National Merit Scholarships financed by U.S. colleges and universities. Officials of each sponsor college selected their scholarship winners from among the Finalists in the 2019 National Merit Scholarship Program who plan to attend their institution. These awards provide between $500 and $2,000 annually for up to four years of undergraduate study at the institution financing the scholarship. An additional group of Scholars will be announced in July, bringing the total number of college-sponsored Merit Scholarship recipients in the 2019 competition to about 4,100.

This year, 173 higher education institutions are underwriting Merit Scholarship awards through the National Merit Scholarship Program. Sponsor colleges and universities include 95 private and 78 public institutions located in 43 states and the District of Columbia.

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College-sponsored Merit Scholarship winners announced today are a part of the distinguished group of about 7,600 high school seniors who will receive National Merit Scholarships for college undergraduate study worth over $31 million. Earlier this spring, NMSC announced winners of corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards and National Merit $2500 Scholarships.

2019 National Merit Scholarship Competition

Over 1.6 million juniors in approximately 22,000 high schools entered the 2019 National Merit Scholarship Program when they took the 2017 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. Last fall, approximately 16,000 Semifinalists were named on a state-representational basis in numbers proportional to each state’s percentage of the national total of graduating high school seniors. Semifinalists were the highest-scoring program entrants in each state and represented less than one percent of the nation’s seniors.

To compete for Merit Scholarship awards, Semifinalists first had to advance to the Finalist level of the competition by fulfilling additional requirements. Each Semifinalist was asked to submit a detailed scholarship application, which included writing an essay and providing information about extracurricular activities, awards, and leadership positions. Semifinalists also had to have an outstanding academic record, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, and earn SAT® scores that confirmed the qualifying test performance. From the Semifinalist group, some 15,000 met requirements for Finalist standing, and about half of the Finalists will be Merit Scholarship winners in 2019.

NMSC, a not-for-profit corporation that operates without government assistance, was established in 1955 to conduct the National Merit Scholarship Program. The majority of National Merit Scholarships provided each year are made possible by the support of approximately 400 independent corporate and college sponsors. These sponsors join NMSC in its efforts to enhance educational opportunities for America’s scholastically talented youth and to encourage the pursuit of academic excellence.

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CAUTION: Any attempt to compare high schools on the basis of numbers of Merit Scholarship winners will lead to erroneous and unsound conclusions. The National Merit Scholarship Program honors individual students who show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. The program does not measure the quality or effectiveness of education within a school, system, or state.