

Thirty-four ACPS high school students named 2024 National Merit finalists

Thirty-four Alachua County Public School students have been selected as finalists in the prestigious National Merit Scholarship Program, which each year recognizes the nation's top-achieving high school students.

Earning finalist status has long been recognized as an indicator of high academic achievement. There are several standards students must achieve to become National Merit finalists. First, they must qualify as semifinalists by earning among the nation's highest scores on the Preliminary SAT/National Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which is taken by more than 1.5 million students annually and measures a student's critical reading, math problem-solving and writing abilities. About 16,000 students are named semifinalists each year.

To become finalists, students must also earn high scores on the SAT. They must also submit applications highlighting their other academic achievements, awards and honors and leadership activities within their school and community. Teacher recommendations and an essay are also required.

Twenty students at Buchholz High School have been named finalists, seven at Eastside High and seven at Gainesville High.

National Merit finalists are all eligible for thousands of dollars in scholarships provided by businesses, colleges and universities and other organizations.

This year's finalists are: Buchholz High School—Megan Chen, Richard Feng, Nolan Gao, William Guan, Noah Hunter, Max Kaplan, Melissa Li, Hailey Lin, Edison Loftus, Kelsey Morey, Peter Neubert, Warren Pfund, Sarah Rodkin, Parsa Tehranipoor, Daniel Wang, Laurie Wang, Nathan Wei, Billy Yang, Kailyn Zhai, Emmanuel Zheng; Eastside High School—Madeleine Gurka, Daniel Huang, Shravya Mandava, August McDaniel, Isaac Savin, Noah Siegel, Rachel Xu; Gainesville High School—Cadien Archer, Maheer Bansari, Peter Blay, Kyle Choe, Kathleen Ferrer, Ellee Guin, Katelinn Kochtan.



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