

**For Immediate Release**  
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## Media Release

### **CCSD Places 26 Students on List of 2019 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists**

**Office of Strategy and  
Communications**

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**Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent of Schools

**Erica Taylor**  
Chief Officer

**Charleston, SC** — Charleston County School District (CCSD) is excited to announce 26 of its students are Semifinalists for the 2019 National Merit Scholarship Program; the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NSMC) released the names of approximately 16,000 Semifinalists last week.

These academically talented high school seniors now have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,500 National Merit Scholarships worth a total of about \$31 million that will be offered this spring.

Congratulations to the following 2019 Semifinalists:

**Academic Magnet**

Colin M. Baker  
Razeen Basunia  
Adriana N. Carter  
Luke A. Freudenheim  
Graysen L. Hasty  
Anthony T. Joyce  
Abigail C. Keating  
Jared T. Lipton  
Christopher M. Littlejohn  
Devinder J. Narula  
Dylan T. Odell  
Paul T. Puckette  
Steven A. Schlosser  
Rachel N. Smith

James G. Staubes  
Zachariah K. Wallace-Wright  
Bohan Wang  
Pauline W. Wang  
Jonathan Y. Ye  
Yuna Zhao

**Wando**

Clemente B. Farias Canepa  
Allison L. Fister  
Jack H. Frain  
John F. Johnson  
Austin T. Setser  
Dylan R. Smith

About 1.6 million juniors in more than 22,000 high schools entered the 2019 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2017 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of Semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest scoring entrants in each state. The number of Semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors.

Academic Magnet's 20 Semifinalists is the best for a single school in South Carolina this year.

"Academic Magnet High School is once again proud to lead CCSD in National Merit Semifinalists for 2018," said Principal Catherine Spencer. "Twenty exceptional young men and women from AMHS have been duly recognized for their motivation and academic achievement. We applaud our Raptors and look forward to future news of their exciting college admissions and scholarship awards."

To become a Finalist, the Semifinalist and his or her high school must submit a detailed scholarship application that includes the Semifinalist's academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. A Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test.

"I am thrilled to see six of our Warriors have the opportunity to earn these elite scholarships," stated Principal Sherry Eppelsheimer. "All of them have been dedicated to academic excellence during their high school years at Wando and have already made a positive impact at our school. I look forward to seeing what other accomplishments they will achieve in their final year at Wando and beyond."

2019 National Merit Scholarship finalists (expected be around 15,000) will be contacted by NSMC in February, and winners will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning in April and concluding in July.

For more information about CCSD's 2019 NMSC Semifinalists, please contact the Office of Strategy and Communications at (843) 937-6303.

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#### **About the Charleston County School District**

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is the second largest school system in South Carolina representing a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools that span 1,000 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 86 schools and specialized programs. With approximately 6,100 employees district-wide, CCSD is the fourth largest employer in the region.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, charter, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), and Montessori schools, and is divided into three Learning Communities. Options include specialized programs in science, engineering and mathematics; liberal arts; music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military and other public service enterprises.