



PRESS RELEASE

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Six PUSD Students Awarded 2018 National Merit Scholarships

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) announced that this year's National Merit Scholarship winners include six students from Poway Unified schools.

Congratulations to the following PUSD students:

- Allison Bao (Westview High School)
- Steven F. Chen (Westview High School)
- Samuel Y. Hunter (Rancho Bernardo High School)
- Robert C. Ozturk (Rancho Bernardo High School)
- Andre A. Yin (Westview High School)
- Kevin Yu (Westview High School)

They are among [29 Merit Scholars in San Diego County](#) and 2,500 Merit Scholars nationwide, chosen from a talent pool of more than 15,000 outstanding Finalists in the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program.

National Merit \$2,500 Scholarship winners are the Finalists in each state judged to have the strongest combination of accomplishments, skills, and potential for success in rigorous college studies.

These Scholars were selected by a committee of college admissions officers and high school counselors, who appraised a substantial amount of information submitted by both the Finalists and their high schools: the academic record, including difficulty level of subjects studied and grades earned; scores from two standardized tests; contributions and leadership in school and community activities; an essay written by the Finalist; and a recommendation written by a high school official.

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This year's National Merit Scholarship Program began in October 2016 when over 1.6 million juniors in more than 22,000 high schools took the Preliminary/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, which served as an initial screen of program entrants. Last fall, the highest-scoring participants in each state, representing less than one percent of the nation's high school seniors, were named Semifinalists on a state-representational basis.

Only these 16,000 Semifinalists had an opportunity to continue in the competition. From the Semifinalist group, some 15,000 students met the very high academic standards and other requirements to advance to the Finalist level of the competition. By the conclusion of the 2018 program, about 7,500 Finalists will have earned the "Merit Scholar" title and received a total of over \$31 million in college scholarships.

NMSC finances most of these single-payment National Merit \$2,500 Scholarships. Corporations and company foundations that sponsor awards through NMSC also help underwrite these scholarships with grants they provide in lieu of paying administrative fees. Scholars may use their awards at any regionally accredited U.S. college or university.

NMSC, a not-for-profit corporation that operates without government assistance, was founded in 1955 specifically to conduct the National Merit Scholarship Program. The majority of scholarships offered each year are underwritten by approximately 410 independent corporate and college sponsors that share NMSC's goals of honoring scholastically talented youth and encouraging academic excellence at all levels of education.