

For Immediate Release
July 24, 2019

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Media Release

Last round of 2019 NMSC winners includes CCSD scholar

Charleston, SC – The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) made four separate announcements regarding National Merit Scholarship winners in 2019. Charleston County School District (CCSD) was represented in each wave, including the final list released earlier this month, as Academic Magnet High School’s (AMHS) Yuna Zhao was named a college-sponsored Merit Scholarship winner; she will attend the University of Maryland.

Zhao’s selection brings the final total of CCSD students to earn money from NMSC in 2019 to 20. Last month, 10 CCSD students were also named NMSC college-sponsored winners. In May, four more scholars from CCSD were named National Merit \$2,500 Scholarship winners. Back in April, five students from the District earned prestigious corporate-sponsored National Merit Scholarships.

The NMSC announced approximately 540 additional college-sponsored winners of National Merit Scholarships on Monday, including eight from the state of South Carolina.

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 institutions. These awards provide between \$500 and \$2,000 annually for up to four years of undergraduate study.

“It was a record-breaking year for National Merit scholarships awarded to the class of 2019,” said Principal Catherine Spencer. “Yuna joins an exceptional group of 20 scholars whose dedication and commitment to the highest achievement has been recognized and rewarded. We are very proud of all of our Academic Magnet finalists.”

This year’s competition for National Merit Scholarships began when over 1.6 million juniors in approximately 22,000 high schools took the 2017 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. In September 2018, about 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.

Office of Strategy and
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Approximately 7,500 Finalists were selected to receive National Merit Scholarships in 2018, totaling over \$31 million. NMSC, a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, was established in 1955 to conduct the National Merit Scholarship Program. The majority of National Merit Scholarships offered each year are underwritten by 410 independent corporate and college sponsors that support NMSC's efforts to honor the nation's scholastically talented youth and encourage academic excellence at all levels of education.

NMSC, a not-for-profit corporation that operates without government assistance, was founded in 1955 to conduct the National Merit Scholarship Program. Over the past 64 years, more than 345,000 outstanding young individuals have won National Merit Scholarships worth over \$1.2 billion.

For more information, 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 spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 87 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.