

For Immediate Release

April 27, 2022

Contact:

Andy Pruitt, 843-937-6583

Media Release

Two Wando students earn corporate-sponsored National Merit Scholarships

Charleston, SC – The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) announced the first group of recipients in the 67th annual National Merit Scholarship Program today, and two students from Wando High School received corporate-sponsored National Merit Scholarships. Both **Clarie E. Andersen** and **Akanksha S. Patwardhan** are receiving money through the National Merit South Carolina Sports Medicine and Orthopaedic Center Scholarship.

"It is with much honor and pride that we recognize Claire Andersen and Akanksha Patwardhan," said Wando's principal, Dr. Sherry Eppelsheimer. "Both of them are true Warriors, and they embody the true meaning of our motto, 'Walk the Warrior Way.' These scholarships directly result from their dedication and commitment to their academics and all endeavors they undertake. They are both certainly worthy of this recognition."

Approximately 1,000 distinguished high school seniors (including 10 from South Carolina) earned scholarships financed by 136 corporations, company foundations, and other business organizations. Most of the awards are renewable for up to four years of college undergraduate study and provide annual stipends from \$1,000 to \$10,000 annually. Some offer a single payment ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000.

According to the NMSC, high school juniors entered the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program when they took the 2020 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which served as an initial screen of program entrants.

Semifinalists first had to advance to the next round by fulfilling additional requirements. Each semifinalist had 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, over 15,000 students met finalist requirements.

By the conclusion of the 2022 competition, about 7,500 Finalists will receive National Merit Scholarships totaling nearly \$28 million. According to evaluators, winners are finalists who have the strongest combination of academic skills and

Division of Strategy and
Communications

Donald R. Kennedy, Sr.
Interim Superintendent of Schools

Erica Taylor, Ed.D.
Chief of Staff

achievements, extracurricular accomplishments, and potential for success in rigorous college studies.

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 some 400 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.

For more information, contact the Division of Strategy and Communications at (843) 937-6303.

###

About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all of its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves approximately 49,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools. Options include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military.