



## NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP CORPORATION

1560 Sherman Avenue, Suite 200, Evanston, Illinois 60201-4897 (847) 866-5100

### NATIONAL MERIT® SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS April 18, 2018 Announcement

Contact: Eileen Artemakis or Matthew Budreau  
Public Information

Phone: 847-866-5100  
Email: [mediainfo@nmerit.net](mailto:mediainfo@nmerit.net)  
Website: [www.nationalmerit.org](http://www.nationalmerit.org)

#### **Advance: For release on Wednesday, April 18, 2018**

**Note to editors: Corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarship® winners in your state are listed alphabetically by city following this press release. News media are encouraged to contact high school principals for additional information about these outstanding students.**

*This material is prepared solely for news media to announce the names of Merit Scholar® designees; its use for any other purpose is prohibited.*

*This is the first announcement of National Merit Scholars in 2018 by National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). NMSC will name recipients of National Merit® \$2500 Scholarships on May 9, and winners of college-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards on June 6 and July 16. By the conclusion of this year's competition, about 7,500 academic champions will have won National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$31 million.*

### **Corporate-Sponsored Merit Scholarship Winners**

(Evanston, Illinois) Today, National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) released the names of the first group of winners in the 63rd annual National Merit Scholarship Program. Approximately 1,000 distinguished high school seniors have won corporate-sponsored National Merit Scholarship awards financed by about 200 corporations, company foundations, and other business organizations.

Scholars were selected from students who advanced to the Finalist level in the National Merit Scholarship competition and met criteria of their scholarship sponsors. Corporate sponsors provide National Merit Scholarships for Finalists who are children of their employees, who are residents of communities the company serves, or who plan to pursue college majors or careers the sponsor wishes to encourage.

Most of these awards are renewable for up to four years of college undergraduate study and provide annual stipends that range from \$500 to \$10,000 per year. Some provide a single payment between \$2,500 and \$5,000. Recipients can use their awards at any regionally accredited U.S. college or university of their choice.

Funding for these National Merit Scholarships is provided by corporate organizations that represent nearly all sectors of American industry. Sponsors from the business community have underwritten awards offered in all 63 competitions, expending or committing more than \$789 million to support the intellectual development of the nation's scholastically talented youth.

### 2018 National Merit Scholarship Competition

Over 1.6 million juniors in more than 22,000 high schools entered the 2018 National Merit Scholarship Program when they took the 2016 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. In September 2017, some 16,000 Semifinalists were designated 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.

To be considered for a National Merit Scholarship, Semifinalists had to fulfill requirements to advance to Finalist standing. Each Semifinalist was asked to complete 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 their qualifying test performance. From the Semifinalist group, some 15,000 met Finalist requirements.

By the conclusion of the 2018 competition, about 7,500 Finalists will have been selected to receive National Merit Scholarships totaling over \$31 million. Winners are the Finalist candidates judged to have the strongest combination of academic skills and 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 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.

# # #

**CAUTION:** Any attempt to compare high schools on the basis of numbers of Merit Scholarship winners will lead to erroneous and unsound conclusions. The National Merit Scholarship Program honors *individual* students who show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. The program does not measure the quality or effectiveness of education within a school, system, or state.

<b>Eric Dai</b> Probable career field: Political Science	CELEBRATION 34747	CELEBRATION H. S., CELEBRATION
<b>NATIONAL MERIT WALGREEN CO. SCHOLARSHIP</b> Founded in 1901, Walgreens is the nation's largest and fastest growing drugstore chain and the industry leader in sales, profits and technology use. The company operates approximately 4,000 stores in 43 states and Puerto Rico, with sales of over \$28 billion. Walgreens' strategy is focused on convenience. The company strives to provide its patients and customers with outstanding service and the latest technology available.		
<b>Alfred J. Wieczorek</b> Probable career field: Mechanical Engineering	COOPER CITY 33330	ST. THOMAS AQUINAS H. S., FORT LAUDERDALE
<b>NATIONAL MERIT MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS SCHOLARSHIP</b> The Motorola Solutions Foundation is supported by contributions received from Motorola Solutions, Inc., Chicago, Illinois. National Merit Motorola Scholarships are provided to high school seniors who are sons or daughters of Motorola Solutions employees. In supporting these awards, the Motorola Solutions Foundation demonstrates its confidence in American youth and recognizes the important role which the Motorola family has always played in the company's success.		
<b>Margaret A. Pierce</b> Probable career field: Mathematics	CORAL SPRINGS 33076	HOMESCHOOL
<b>NATIONAL MERIT MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS SCHOLARSHIP</b> The Motorola Solutions Foundation is supported by contributions received from Motorola Solutions, Inc., Chicago, Illinois. National Merit Motorola Scholarships are provided to high school seniors who are sons or daughters of Motorola Solutions employees. In supporting these awards, the Motorola Solutions Foundation demonstrates its confidence in American youth and recognizes the important role which the Motorola family has always played in the company's success.		
<b>Josie L. Kilburn</b> Probable career field: Engineering	FERNANDINA BEACH 32034	FERNANDINA BEACH H. S., FERNANDINA BEACH
<b>NATIONAL MERIT CSX LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP</b> CSX Corporation, based in Jacksonville, Fla., is one of the nation's leading transportation companies, connecting customers to ports, distribution centers and markets across the eastern United States. Through grass-roots volunteerism and focused corporate giving, CSX is committed to supporting the communities where it operates.		
<b>Corrina R. Laird</b> Probable career field: Bioengineering	FLEMING ISLAND 32003	FLEMING ISLAND H. S., ORANGE PARK
<b>NATIONAL MERIT CSX SCHOLARSHIP</b> CSX Corporation, based in Jacksonville, Fla., is one of the nation's leading transportation companies, connecting customers to ports, distribution centers and markets across the eastern United States. Through grass-roots volunteerism and focused corporate giving, CSX is committed to supporting the communities where it operates.		
<b>Joseph P. Hardin</b> Probable career field: Computer Science	GAINESVILLE 32608	BUCHHOLZ H. S., GAINESVILLE
<b>NATIONAL MERIT ABBVIE INC. SCHOLARSHIP</b> AbbVie proudly funds the prestigious National Merit Scholarship awards in support of children of employees of AbbVie Inc., U.S. divisions. AbbVie is a leading global biopharmaceutical company established in 2013. It uniquely combines the assets and capabilities of an experienced pharmaceutical company with the flexibility and focus of a biotech company to pursue meaningful opportunities for patients. Its Merit Scholarship Awards recognize outstanding students who are the sons and daughters of AbbVie employees.		
<b>Mark P. Lyford</b> Probable career field: Law	GENEVA 32732	HOMESCHOOL
<b>NATIONAL MERIT SIEMENS SCHOLARSHIP</b> Siemens Corporation produces and markets electrical and electronic systems, instruments, and components for medicine, science, and industry. Funded through the Siemens Foundation, the purpose of the scholarship program is to support higher education, to honor exceptionally talented high school students, and to aid as many as possible in obtaining a college education.		
<b>Claire R. Patterson</b> Probable career field: International Business	LAKE WORTH 33463	SUNCOAST COMMUNITY H. S., RIVIERA BEACH
<b>NATIONAL MERIT ACI WORLDWIDE, INC. SCHOLARSHIP</b> ACI Worldwide is a global leader in electronic payments. Our Universal Payments software is used by the world's top banks and retailers to process more than \$14 trillion in transactions each day. If you've shopped online or withdrawn money at an ATM, there's a good chance ACI made your transaction possible. In honor of our talented team of ACIers, we sponsor National Merit Scholarships to recognize the exceptional educational achievements of their children and to support the pursuit of dreams.		
<b>Zachery Dahm</b> Probable career field: Engineering	LAND O' LAKES 34639	LAND O' LAKES H. S., LAND O' LAKES
<b>NATIONAL MERIT - THE PWC CHARITABLE FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP</b> The PwC Charitable Foundation, Inc., a section 501(c)(3) organization, is powered by the knowledge, interests and goodwill of our people. It supports our people when in need and invests in emerging solutions to society's greatest challenges in education and humanitarianism.		
<b>Akshaya Venkata</b> Probable career field: Chemical Engineering	LAND O' LAKES 34638	LAND O' LAKES H. S., LAND O' LAKES
<b>NATIONAL MERIT - THE PWC CHARITABLE FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP</b> The PwC Charitable Foundation, Inc., a section 501(c)(3) organization, is powered by the knowledge, interests and goodwill of our people. It supports our people when in need and invests in emerging solutions to society's greatest challenges in education and humanitarianism.		

<b>Shreya N. Patel</b> Probable career field: Actuarial Science	LOXAHATCHEE 33470	SEMINOLE RIDGE H. S., LOXAHATCHEE
<b>NATIONAL MERIT WALGREEN CO. SCHOLARSHIP</b> Founded in 1901, Walgreens is the nation's largest and fastest growing drugstore chain and the industry leader in sales, profits and technology use. The company operates approximately 4,000 stores in 43 states and Puerto Rico, with sales of over \$28 billion. Walgreens' strategy is focused on convenience. The company strives to provide its patients and customers with outstanding service and the latest technology available.		
<b>Katherine J. Elliott</b> Probable career field: Mechanical Engineering	MELBOURNE 32934	EAU GALLIE H. S., MELBOURNE
<b>NATIONAL MERIT ROCKWELL COLLINS SCHOLARSHIP</b> Rockwell Collins, Inc. is a world leader in the design, production and support of communications and aviation electronics solutions for government and commercial customers worldwide. The corporation's charitable priorities include education and arts and culture in order to help strengthen the quality of education and provide opportunities for youth involvement and leadership.		
<b>Adam J. Blackwell</b> Probable career field: Mechanical Engineering	MELBOURNE BEACH 32951	WEST SHORE H. S., MELBOURNE
<b>NATIONAL MERIT NORTHROP GRUMMAN SCHOLARSHIP</b> Northrop Grumman Corporation, based in Los Angeles, California, is a global corporation primarily serving the defense and electronic systems requirements of governments, commerce, and industry in the U.S. and friendly nations around the world. Northrop Grumman Corporation annually supports Merit Scholarship awards for the sons and daughters of employees.		
<b>Jack R. Cruz-Alvarez</b> Probable career field: Journalism	MIAMI 33156	MIAMI PALMETTO H. S., MIAMI
<b>NATIONAL MERIT CITIZEN WATCH SCHOLARSHIP</b> Located in Lyndhurst, New Jersey, Citizen Watch Company of America, Inc. proudly sponsors these awards for National Merit Scholarship Program Finalists throughout the United States. CITIZEN holds the leading position in the mid-priced watch market in the United States. Using their proprietary ecologically friendly Eco-Drive technology, CITIZEN watches are powered by light, storing energy that can power the watch for at least six months.		
<b>Julia L. Freeman</b> Probable career field: Education	NICEVILLE 32578	NICEVILLE H. S., NICEVILLE
<b>NATIONAL MERIT NATIONAL DISTILLERS DISTRIBUTORS FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP</b> National Distillers Distributors Foundation established this endowed scholarship program in 2008. Earnings from the endowed funds annually provide awards to Finalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program.		
<b>Sahan R. Wijewardane</b> Probable career field: Engineering	ORLANDO 32837	FREEDOM H. S., ORLANDO
<b>NATIONAL MERIT BB&amp;T SCHOLARSHIP</b> Winston-Salem-based BB&T Corporation (BB&T) operates banking offices in the Carolinas, Georgia, Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Indiana, Florida, and Washington, DC. BB&T and its subsidiaries offer full-service commercial and retail banking and additional financial services such as insurance, investments, retail brokerage, corporate finance, international banking, leasing and trust. BB&T awards are offered to the children of employees of the BB&T family.		
<b>Daniel J. Wu</b> Probable career field: Science/Research	ORLANDO 32828	TIMBER CREEK H. S., ORLANDO
<b>NATIONAL MERIT SIEMENS SCHOLARSHIP</b> Siemens Corporation produces and markets electrical and electronic systems, instruments, and components for medicine, science, and industry. Funded through the Siemens Foundation, the purpose of the scholarship program is to support higher education, to honor exceptionally talented high school students, and to aid as many as possible in obtaining a college education.		
<b>Wenjie Gong</b> Probable career field: Physics	OVIEDO 32766	SEMINOLE H. S., SANFORD
<b>NATIONAL MERIT SIEMENS SCHOLARSHIP</b> Siemens Corporation produces and markets electrical and electronic systems, instruments, and components for medicine, science, and industry. Funded through the Siemens Foundation, the purpose of the scholarship program is to support higher education, to honor exceptionally talented high school students, and to aid as many as possible in obtaining a college education.		
<b>Margaret E. Regnery</b> Probable career field: International Law	PALM BEACH GARDENS 33418	BENJAMIN SCHOOL, PALM BEACH GARDENS
<b>NATIONAL MERIT NEXTERA ENERGY, INC. SCHOLARSHIP</b> NextEra Energy, Inc. is nationally known as a high quality, efficient, and customer-driven organization focused on energy-related products and services. With a growing presence in more than 18 states, it is widely recognized as one of the country's premier power companies. Providing Merit Scholarship awards to qualifying children of employees further demonstrates the company's continued support of education by recognizing the accomplishments of these outstanding students.		
<b>Leo Zhang</b> Probable career field: Medicine	PENSACOLA 32503	PENSACOLA H. S., PENSACOLA
<b>NATIONAL MERIT SOUTHERN COMPANY SCHOLARSHIP</b> With 46,000 megawatts of generating capacity and 1,500 billion cubic feet of combined natural gas consumption and throughput volume, Southern Company serves 9 million customers through its subsidiaries, including electric operating companies in four states, natural gas distribution companies in seven states, a competitive generation company serving wholesale customers across America, a nationally recognized provider of customized energy solutions, as well as fiber optics and wireless communications.		

<b>Matthew A. Ray</b> Probable career field: Finance	POMPANO BEACH 33060	CALVARY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY, FORT LAUDERDALE
<b>NATIONAL MERIT BENTLEY SYSTEMS SCHOLARSHIP</b> Bentley Systems, Incorporated is the global leader dedicated to providing architects, engineers, geospatial professionals, constructors, and owner-operators with comprehensive software solutions for sustaining infrastructure. Founded in 1984, Bentley has more than 3,000 colleagues in 50 countries, more than \$500 million in annual revenues, and since 2003 has invested more than \$1 billion in research, development, and acquisitions.		
<b>Felipe K. Hanel</b> Probable career field: Biomedical Engineering	PONTE VEDRA 32082	PONTE VEDRA H. S., PONTE VEDRA
<b>NATIONAL MERIT CSX LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP</b> CSX Corporation, based in Jacksonville, Fla., is one of the nation's leading transportation companies, connecting customers to ports, distribution centers and markets across the eastern United States. Through grass-roots volunteerism and focused corporate giving, CSX is committed to supporting the communities where it operates.		
<b>Peregrine Eliana Davis Hayward</b> Probable career field: Medicine	SATELLITE BEACH 32937	SATELLITE H. S., SATELLITE BEACH
<b>NATIONAL MERIT NORTHROP GRUMMAN SCHOLARSHIP</b> Northrop Grumman Corporation, based in Los Angeles, California, is a global corporation primarily serving the defense and electronic systems requirements of governments, commerce, and industry in the U.S. and friendly nations around the world. Northrop Grumman Corporation annually supports Merit Scholarship awards for the sons and daughters of employees.		
<b>Matthew C. Maloney</b> Probable career field: Civil Engineering	SEBASTIAN 32958	SEBASTIAN RIVER H. S., SEBASTIAN
<b>NATIONAL MERIT GULFSTREAM/ROLLS-ROYCE ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP</b> Rolls-Royce, the world leader in business jet engines, established the Gulfstream/Rolls-Royce Annual Scholarship to acknowledge and support the educational aspirations and talent of the children of Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation employees. Each year, Rolls-Royce North America companies donate nearly \$1 million to philanthropic causes and efforts in North America. Rolls-Royce and its employees are committed to adding value as a good corporate citizen to our customers and those communities in which we operate.		
<b>Carson Hanel</b> Probable career field: Software Engineering	SEMINOLE 33776	LAKEWOOD H. S., ST. PETERSBURG
<b>NATIONAL MERIT RAYTHEON SCHOLARSHIP</b> Raytheon Company is a technology and innovation leader specializing in defense, security, and civil markets throughout the world. Raytheon provides state-of-the-art electronics, mission systems integration, and capabilities in various areas: sensing; effects; command, control, communications and intelligence systems; cybersecurity; and a broad range of mission support services.		
<b>Royce C. Thompson</b> Probable career field: Computer Science	SEVILLE 32190	T. DEWITT TAYLOR H. S., PIERSON
<b>NATIONAL MERIT GEORGIA-PACIFIC FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP</b> Georgia-Pacific Foundation is supported by contributions received from Georgia-Pacific Corporation, Atlanta, Georgia. The Foundation supports Merit Scholarship awards for sons and daughters of employees of Georgia-Pacific Corporation and its subsidiary companies. Through this program, it recognizes the need to further the education of the children of company employees.		
<b>Oscar T. Aguilar</b> Probable career field: Engineering	ST. AUGUSTINE 32092	ALLEN D. NEASE H. S., PONTE VEDRA
<b>NATIONAL MERIT CSX SCHOLARSHIP</b> CSX Corporation, based in Jacksonville, Fla., is one of the nation's leading transportation companies, connecting customers to ports, distribution centers and markets across the eastern United States. Through grass-roots volunteerism and focused corporate giving, CSX is committed to supporting the communities where it operates.		
<b>Rohan Bhargava</b> Probable career field: Materials Engineering	ST. AUGUSTINE 32086	ALLEN D. NEASE H. S., PONTE VEDRA
<b>NATIONAL MERIT CSX LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP</b> CSX Corporation, based in Jacksonville, Fla., is one of the nation's leading transportation companies, connecting customers to ports, distribution centers and markets across the eastern United States. Through grass-roots volunteerism and focused corporate giving, CSX is committed to supporting the communities where it operates.		
<b>Hadley C. Browder</b> Probable career field: Statistics	ST. JOHNS 32259	CREEKSIDE H. S., ST. JOHNS
<b>NATIONAL MERIT CSX LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP</b> CSX Corporation, based in Jacksonville, Fla., is one of the nation's leading transportation companies, connecting customers to ports, distribution centers and markets across the eastern United States. Through grass-roots volunteerism and focused corporate giving, CSX is committed to supporting the communities where it operates.		
<b>Joshua B. French</b> Probable career field: Medical Research	ST. JOHNS 32259	BARTRAM TRAIL H. S., JACKSONVILLE
<b>NATIONAL MERIT CSX LEADERSHIP SCHOLARSHIP</b> CSX Corporation, based in Jacksonville, Fla., is one of the nation's leading transportation companies, connecting customers to ports, distribution centers and markets across the eastern United States. Through grass-roots volunteerism and focused corporate giving, CSX is committed to supporting the communities where it operates.		

---

<p><b>Gage E. Owens</b>                  Probable career field: Biology</p>	<p>TALLAHASSEE 32312</p>	<p>LAWTON CHILES H. S., TALLAHASSEE</p>
<p><b>NATIONAL MERIT BASF CORPORATION SCHOLARSHIP</b>                  BASF Corporation, a Fortune 100 company, is the North American arm of the BASF Group, one of the world's oldest and largest chemical companies. Its highly diversified product mix includes basic, intermediate and specialty chemicals, colorants, dispersions, fiber raw materials, automotive coatings, printing inks, urethane specialties and chemicals, plastics, advanced composites, crop protection products, antifreeze, pharmaceuticals, and vitamins.</p>		
<hr/>		
<p><b>Emily A. Leonard</b>                  Probable career field: Physical Therapy</p>	<p>WESLEY CHAPEL 33543</p>	<p>WIREGRASS RANCH H. S., WESLEY CHAPEL</p>
<p><b>NATIONAL MERIT STATE FARM COMPANIES FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP</b>                  The State Farm Companies Foundation believes in developing visionary youth through the power of education. Each spring, the Foundation awards 100 scholarships to legal dependents of employees, agents, and retirees of State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company and its subsidiaries (State Farm®). State Farm Companies Foundation is a tax-exempt private foundation funded by State Farm, the largest auto insurer in the U.S.</p>		
<hr/>		
<p><b>Ami P. Asar</b>                  Probable career field: Law</p>	<p>WEST MELBOURNE 32904</p>	<p>WEST SHORE H. S., MELBOURNE</p>
<p><b>NATIONAL MERIT NORTHROP GRUMMAN SCHOLARSHIP</b>                  Northrop Grumman Corporation, based in Los Angeles, California, is a global corporation primarily serving the defense and electronic systems requirements of governments, commerce, and industry in the U.S. and friendly nations around the world. Northrop Grumman Corporation annually supports Merit Scholarship awards for the sons and daughters of employees.</p>		
<hr/>		
<p><b>Jennifer K. Law</b>                  Probable career field: Applied Mathematics</p>	<p>WINTER PARK 32792</p>	<p>WINTER PARK H. S., WINTER PARK</p>
<p><b>NATIONAL MERIT LEIDOS, INC. SCHOLARSHIP</b>                  Headquartered in Reston, VA, Leidos is a global science and technology solutions and services leader working to solve the world's toughest challenges in the defense, intelligence, homeland security, civil, and health markets. The company's 32,000 employees support vital missions for government and commercial customers.</p>		