

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS

Some 8,400 National Merit Scholarships of three types and approximately 1,300 Special Scholarships will be awarded in 2012; these 9,700 awards will have a combined value of more than \$48 million. Different types of scholarships will be offered, but no student can receive more than one monetary award from NMSC.

National Merit® \$2500 Scholarships-These awards are unique because every Finalist is considered for one and winners are named in every state and other selection units. The number awarded in each state is determined by the same representational procedure used to designate Semifinalists. Finalists compete with all other Finalists in their state or selection unit for one of the 2,500 National Merit \$2500 Scholarships. Winners are selected by a committee of college admission officers and high school counselors. National Merit \$2500 Scholarships provide a single payment of \$2,500. NMSC's own funds support the majority of these scholarships, but corporate sponsors help underwrite these awards with grants they provide to NMSC in lieu of paying administrative fees.

NMSC uses PSAT/NMSQT Selection Index scores (the sum of critical reading, mathematics, and writing skills scores) to determine participants who qualify for program recognition. Juniors who took the PSAT/NMSQT are eligible for selection.

In April, high-scoring participants from every state will be offered the College Plans Reporting Service. These students will be invited to name two colleges or universities to which they would like to be referred by NMSC.

In early September, nearly a third of the 50,000 high scorers will be notified that they have qualified as Semifinalists. Semifinalists are the highest-scoring entrants in each state. NMSC will notify them through their schools and provide scholarship application materials explaining requirements to advance in the competition for National Merit Scholarships. The names of the semifinalists are also released to the news media for announcement.

In late September, more than two-thirds of the 50,000 high scorers will receive Letters of Commendation in recognition of their outstanding academic promise, but they will not continue in the competition for National Merit Scholarships. However, some of these students may be candidates for Special Scholarships provided by corporate and business sponsors.

In February, Semifinalists who meet academic and other requirements will be notified that they have advanced to Finalist standing. All National Merit Scholarship winners (Merit Scholar® awardees) will be chosen from this group of Finalists, based on their abilities, skills, and accomplishments.

Beginning in March, NMSC will notify winners of Special Scholarships provided by corporate sponsors. Recipients, chosen from candidates sent scholarship application

materials in December, will be outstanding students (although not Finalists) who meet their sponsors' eligibility criteria. Sponsors will handle public announcement of their Special Scholarship winners.

Beginning in March, NMSC will notify winners of the three types of National Merit Scholarships:

- National Merit® \$2500 Scholarships
- Corporate-sponsored scholarships
- College-sponsored scholarships

In April, May, and July, NMSC will release names of Merit Scholar designees to news media for public announcement.