

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI-NR 2015-39

Tuesday, April 21, 2015

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Wisconsin has nine Presidential Scholar Semifinalists

MADISON — Nine Wisconsin students have been named semifinalists for the 2015 Presidential Scholars award, considered the nation’s highest honor for graduating high school seniors.

“Students chosen for this program have shown exceptional academic scholarship and talent in the visual, creative, and performing arts,” said State Superintendent Tony Evers. “I congratulate them on being recognized for their hard work and thank the parents and teachers who supported this accomplishment.”

The Presidential Scholars program was established in 1964 to recognize and honor some of our nation’s most distinguished high school students. The state’s nine semifinalists are among 565 semifinalists for 2015.

Wisconsin’s Presidential Scholar semifinalists are

- Blake J. Anderson, Homestead High School, Mequon;
- Sabrina B. Black, West High School, Wauwatosa;
- Veronica J. Daniel, Central High School, Brookfield;
- Aidan D. McCarty of Elm Grove, Brookfield Academy;
- Nicholas V. Ngo, De Pere High School;
- Nicholas J. Rossiter, Cedarburg Senior High School;
- Tanner R. Tanyeri of Madison, Middleton High School;
- Alethia M. Tilford, Ronald Reagan College Preparatory High School, Milwaukee; and
- Nathan B. Wang, James Madison Memorial High School, Madison.

From nearly 3.3 million graduating high school seniors, more than 4,300 students were identified as candidates for the program based on exceptional performance on the ACT or SAT college admissions tests. About 60 of those students, including Tanyeri, were identified through their participation in the YoungARTS program, sponsored by the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts. Candidates were invited to complete application materials that include essays, self-assessments, secondary school reports, and transcripts. An independent, national committee of educators convened by the Commission on Presidential Scholars reviewed application materials to select semifinalists.

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The Commission on Presidential Scholars will make the final selection of the nation’s 121 academic Presidential Scholars — one male and one female from each state, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and from families of U.S. citizens living abroad; and up to 15 students chosen at large. The Presidential Scholars Commission also chooses up to 20 Presidential Scholars in the Arts for a total of up to 141 Presidential Scholars.

Students chosen as Presidential Scholars will travel to Washington, D.C., in June, where they will meet with government officials, educators, authors, musicians, scientists, and other accomplished individuals. Presidential Scholars will have opportunities to visit area museums and monuments and have a chance to exchange ideas and build friendships with their peers. They also will receive a Presidential Scholars medallion at a ceremony sponsored by the White House.

Scholars are asked to identify one teacher who was most influential in their education. The teacher also will be invited to the nation’s capital for National Recognition Week and will receive the Presidential Scholars program Teacher Recognition Award.

“Best wishes to the 2015 Presidential Scholar Semifinalists,” Evers said. “They are among the many fine students who will be graduating from our high schools this spring.”

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