

News Release

Education Information Services ■ 125 South Webster Street ■ P.O. Box 7841 ■ Madison, WI 53707-7841 ■ (608) 266-3559

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI-NR 2016-56

Monday, May 9, 2016

Contact: Tom McCarthy, DPI Communications Director, (608) 266-3559

Three Wisconsin students named Presidential Scholars

Each scholar names their most influential teacher

MADISON — Three students who will be graduating from Wisconsin high schools in the coming weeks have been named Presidential Scholars for 2016. They are among just 160 students nationwide receiving the honor.

The state's Presidential Scholars are **Kendra Spier** of Cambridge High School, **Paige Kassner** of Kewaunee Senior High School, and **Gabriel Saiz** of West High School in Madison. Spier is a U.S. Presidential Scholar in Career and Technical Education, a new recognition category.

"I am so happy for these young people, who represent the outstanding graduates of the Class of 2016," said State Superintendent Tony Evers. "Kendra, Paige, and Gabriel know it takes hard work, dedication, and responsibility to balance their academic studies along with a host of extracurricular and service activities they pursued in high school. My message to these scholars, and all 2016 graduates, is to keep learning and giving; you will create a better future for all of us."

The 2016 U.S. Presidential Scholars are comprised of one young man and one young woman from each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and from U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at large, 20 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts, and for the first time, 20 U.S. Presidential Scholars in Career and Technical Education. To commemorate their achievement, the Scholars will receive the U.S. Presidential Scholars medallion at a June 19 ceremony sponsored by the White House.

Each scholar named a most influential teacher as part of their application materials. Spier chose her high school agriculture teacher, **Emily Klingbeil**. Kassner named **Dawne Kennedy**, reading and special education teacher at the Kewaunee Senior High School. Saiz named his high school Advanced Placement European History teacher **Susan Gevelber**.

Created in 1964, the Presidential Scholars Program has honored nearly 7,000 of the nation's top-performing students. The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars selects honored scholars annually

(more)

based on their academic success, artistic excellence, essays, school evaluations, and transcripts as well as evidence of community service, leadership, and demonstrated commitment to high ideals. Of the 3 million students expected to graduate from high school this year, more than 5,600 candidates qualified for the 2016 awards determined by outstanding performance on the ACT and SAT college admissions exams, through nominations made by Chief State School Officers, other partner recognition organizations, or the National YoungArts Foundation's nationwide YoungArts competition.

###

NOTE: More information about the Presidential Scholars Program is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/psp/index.html>. This news release is available electronically at http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2016_56.pdf.