



NEWS RELEASE

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Four BCPS graduates, graduating seniors earn college-sponsored National Merit® Scholarships

Students represent Carver Center, Catonsville High, Dulaney High, Towson High

Towson – Three 2021 Baltimore County Public Schools graduates and one BCPS graduating senior are among the approximately 3,100 distinguished high school seniors from across the nation who have won National Merit® Scholarships financed by U.S. colleges and universities.

The scholarship winners are:

- Lucas A. LaBuff of Idlewylde, a George Washington Carver Center for Arts and Technology graduate who plans a career in software engineering and received a National Merit University of Maryland Scholarship
- Daniel J. Melia of Baltimore, a Towson High School graduate who is interested in a career in politics and received a National Merit Fordham University Scholarship
- Nikitha C. Mupparaju of Catonsville, a Catonsville High School graduating senior who is pursuing a career in dentistry and received a National Merit University of Florida Scholarship
- Steven H. Zhang of Cockeysville, a Dulaney High School graduate who is focused on a computer science career and received a National Merit University of Maryland Scholarship

“We are so proud of these young people and honored by their contributions to the BCPS culture of excellence,” said BCPS Superintendent Dr. Darryl L. Williams. “We also celebrate their parents and teachers for nurturing their academic achievements.”

Officials of each sponsor college selected their scholarship winners from among the finalists in the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program who plan to attend their institution. These awards provide between \$500 and \$2,000 annually for up to four years of undergraduate study at the institution financing the scholarship. This year, 160 higher education institutions are underwriting Merit Scholarship awards through the National Merit Scholarship Program.

2021 National Merit Scholarship Competition

More than 1.5 million juniors representing about 21,000 high schools entered the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program when they took the 2019 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. In September 2020, approximately 17,000 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 1 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 and be endorsed and recommended by a high school official. From the semifinalist group, some 16,000 met finalist requirements.

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[Baltimore County Public Schools](#), the nation's 25th largest school system, is focused on raising the bar and closing gaps to prepare our students for the future. Thanks to innovative and talented leaders, teachers, staff, and students, BCPS celebrates [many honors](#).