



For Immediate Release

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Media Release

Academic Magnet's Lily Lassiter honored as 2021 U.S. Presidential Scholar

Lassiter is the second Raptor in four years to earn prestigious award

Academic Magnet High
School

Gerrita Postlewait, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Karolyn Belcher
Chief Academic Officer

Joseph Williams, Ed.D.
Associate Superintendent
Secondary Learning Community

Catherine Spencer
Principal

North Charleston, SC – Lily Lassiter, her family, and the Academic Magnet High School (AMHS) community are celebrating a significant honor; the senior is a 2021 United States Presidential Scholar. The U.S. Department of Education announced the 57th class of U.S. Presidential Scholars today. This award is considered one of the nation's highest awards for students.

Lassiter is one of two U.S. Presidential Scholars from South Carolina this year, and she is the second Raptor in four years to receive this award ([Jenny Yao](#) was named a U.S. Presidential Scholar in 2018).

"Being recognized as a U.S. Presidential Scholar is an incredible honor," said Lassiter. "I am humbled and so grateful to everyone who has supported me over the years."

According to the U.S. Department of Education, approximately 6,000 of the 3.6 million high school students expected to graduate this year were identified as candidates for the program. The [White House Commission on Presidential Scholars](#) selects scholars annually based on their academic success, artistic and technical excellence, essays, school evaluations, and transcripts, as well as evidence of community service, leadership, and demonstrated commitment to high ideals.

Lassiter, who will attend Yale University in the fall, and the rest of the Presidential Scholars Class of 2021, will be recognized for their outstanding achievement by the White House this summer.

"Over the past four years, I have had the great pleasure of witnessing the continued growth and grace of this extraordinary young woman," added Principal Catherine Spencer. "Her academic achievement is only one piece of her multifaceted accomplishment in the arts, service, and leadership. Lily and I have shared many special moments over the years, and this well-deserved recognition gives our entire Raptor community great pride."

With Lassiter earning finalist status for this honor, her sponsor, former AMHS AP Physics I teacher Kirk Lindgren, was named a 2021 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program Distinguished Teacher.

Academic Magnet sent 14 students to the semifinalist stage of the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program this year.

As directed by Presidential Executive Order, the 2021 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 U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at-large, 20 Scholars in the arts and 20 Scholars in career and technical education.

Created in 1964, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program has honored over 7,600 of the nation's top-performing students. The program was expanded in 1979 to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, literary, and performing arts. In 2015, the program was again extended to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields.

"The 2021 Presidential Scholars represent extraordinary achievements for our extraordinary times," said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. "I am delighted to join President Biden in saluting these outstanding young people for their achievements, service, character, and continued pursuit of excellence. Their examples make me proud and hopeful about the future. Honoring them can remind us all of the great potentials in each new generation and renew our commitment to helping them achieve their dreams."

For more information about Lassiter, contact Catherine Spencer at (843) 746-1300. To learn more about the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program, contact the U.S. Department of Education's Press Office at (202) 401-1576.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally-accredited school district that is committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all of its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves more than 50,000 students in 87 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse, expanding portfolio of options and specialized programs, delivered through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools. Options include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; and military.