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## USD 497 News Release

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### **District Celebrates Eight National Merit Semifinalists**

The National Merit® Scholarship Corporation announced this week the names of approximately 16,000 semifinalists in the 70th annual National Merit Scholarship Program.

Lawrence Public Schools congratulates our eight National Merit Semifinalists: Amaya Gab, Malcolm Karman, Richard Li, Noah Pultz-Earle, Elinor Russo, Anwen Williams, and Lois Xie of Free State High and Elise N. Rathmel of Lawrence High.

Over 1.3 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2025 National Merit® Scholarship Program by taking the 2023 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state.

These academically talented high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 6,870 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$26 million offered next spring. The National Merit Scholarship Corporation expects about 95 percent of semifinalists to attain finalist standing and approximately half of the finalists to win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar® title.

The National Merit® Scholarship Program shares that the number of semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors. Using numbers of semifinalists to compare high schools, educational systems, or states will result in erroneous conclusions. The program honors individual students who show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. It does not measure the quality or effectiveness of education within a school, system, or state.

Visit [www.nationalmerit.org](http://www.nationalmerit.org) for more information.

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