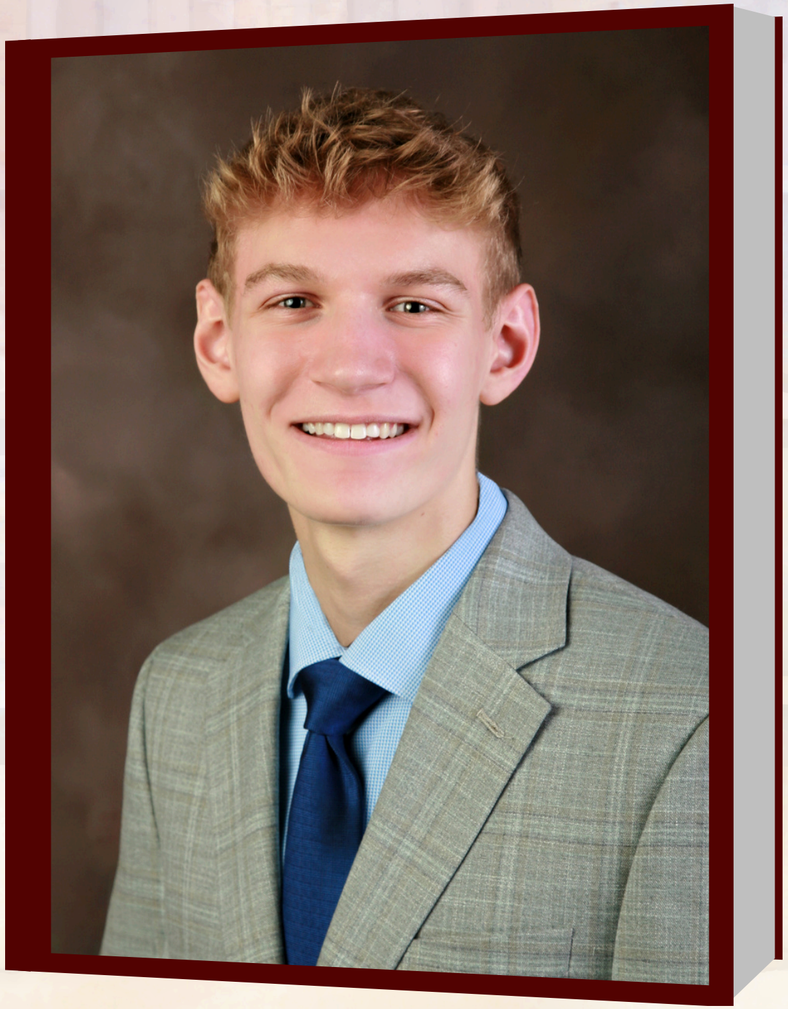
NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARS

February 2026

GABRIEL AKIAN

Teacher: Ms. Akian
Book: *Never Enough* by Jennifer Breheny Wallace

“You've taught me more than any education ever could.”



ATHREYA ARAVIND

Teacher: Ms. Knecht
Book: *The Lightning Thief*
by Rick Riordan

“Your joy and passion when teaching ignited in me a love for learning and an ambition that has shaped the past 10 years of my life.”



ZACHARY BATTISTELLA

Teacher: Ms. Bender
Book: *Eagles: Taking It to the Limit* by Ben Fong-Torres

“Thank you for teaching me how beautiful and amazing math is.”



ELENA CARRANZA

Teacher: Mr. Magdalenski
Book: *The House of Mirth* by Edith Wharton

“Thank you for enhancing my love of literature. I have come such a long way from the freshman who struggled to turn her thoughts into carefully worded analysis, and I have you to thank for that.”



LAUREN CLARK

Teacher: Ms. Encarnacion
Book: *Winnie the Pooh* by A. A. Milne

“Thank you for being a constant source of kindness and positivity.”



GRACE HICKEY

Teacher: Mr. Welsh
Book: *To Kill A Mockingbird*
by Harper Lee

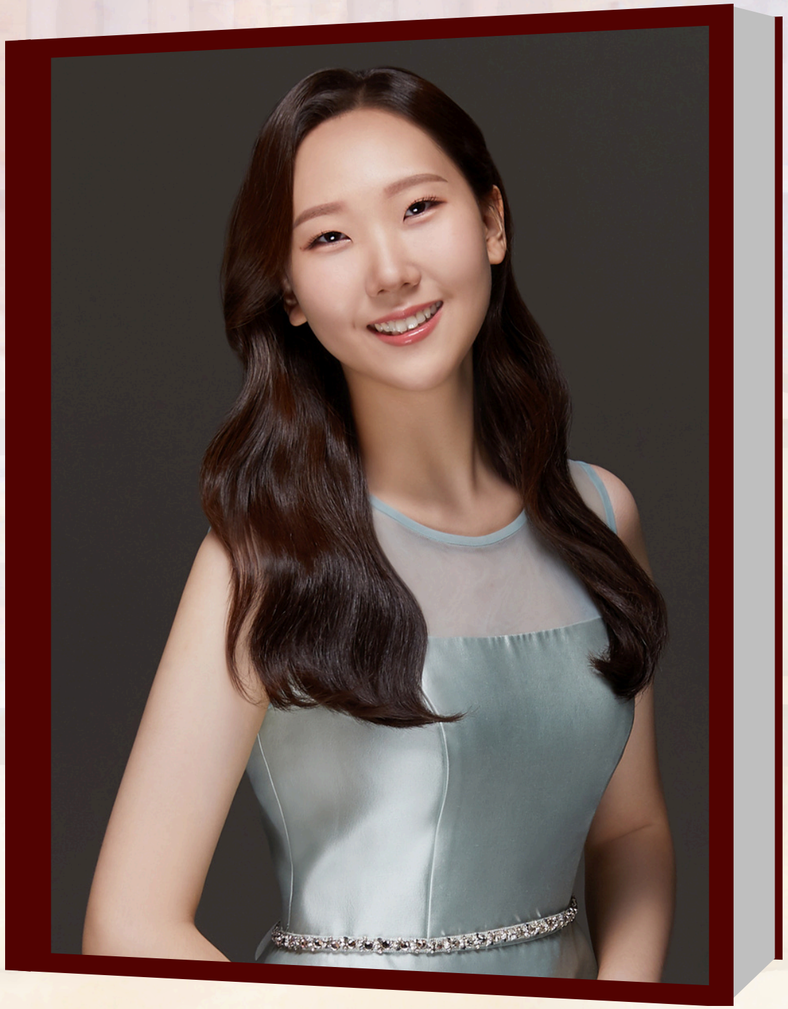
“Thank you for teaching me how to talk, read, and most importantly, listen.”



ALLISON KIM

Teacher: Ms. Viswanath
Book: *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee

“Thank you for being such an inspiring teacher and for sparking my interest in physics.”



HOOKS LEBLANC

Teacher: Mr. Baragona
Book: *Golf: By the Numbers*
by Ronald Minton

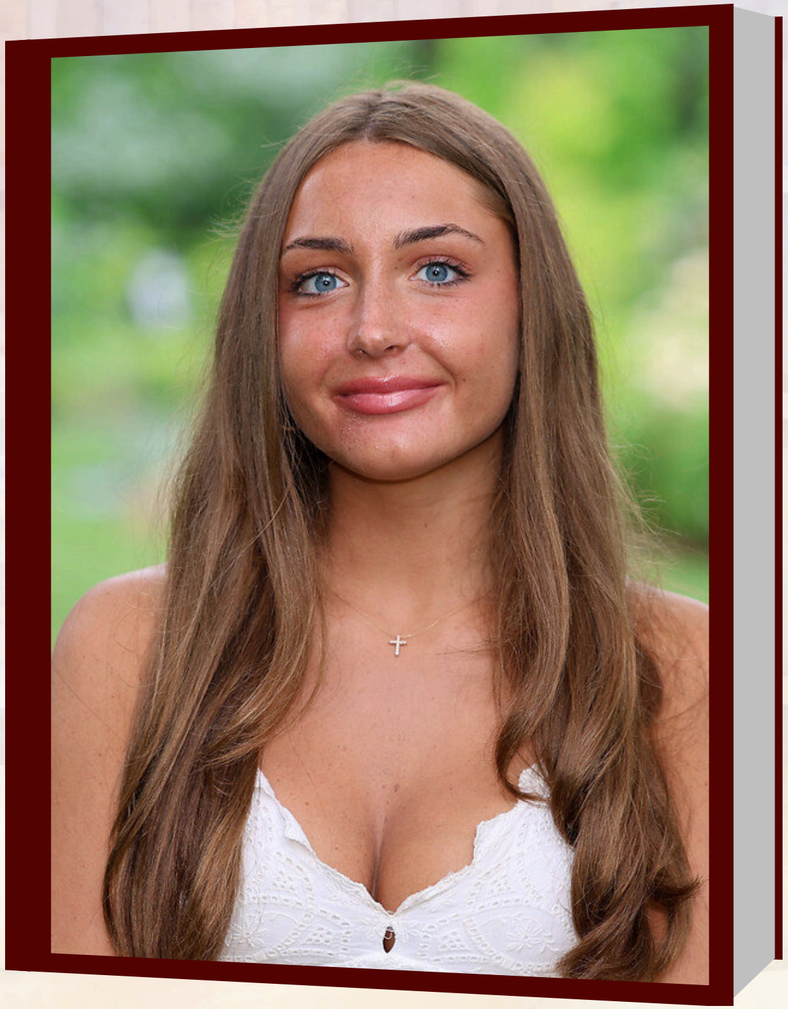
“Thank you for always being so upbeat and energetic, and for creating an environment in which it's easy to learn.”



STELLA LEMKAU

Teacher: Ms. Guinee
Book: *Familiar Quotations*
by John Bartlett

“Thank you so much for helping me grow in my favorite subject and being an amazing teacher.”



BEN LEVKOV

Teacher: Ms. Laquerre
Book: *How the Other Half Lives* by Jacob Riis

“Your zeal for teaching and incredible knowledge of history have inspired me to pursue a higher education.”



ALEXIS MOLLIN

Teacher: Ms. Wright
Book: *Ninth Street Women*
by Mary Gabriel

“Thank you for pushing me past my comfort zone and always being there for me as a student, an artist, and a person.”



CONNOR MOON

Teacher: Mr. Pascal
Book: *The Boys in the Boat*
by Daniel James Brown

“Thank you for helping me step outside my comfort zone and make connections with people I would not have met otherwise.”



BETTINA PANGILINAN

Teacher: Ms. Bartlett
Book: *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez

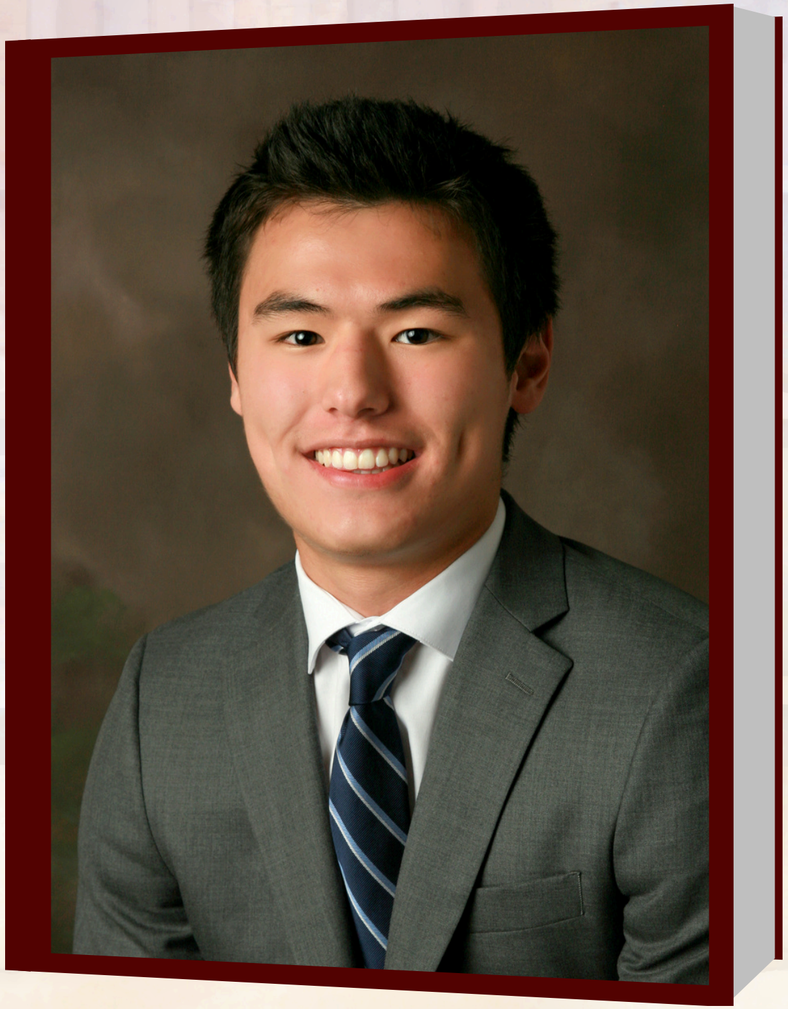
“Your passion for teaching Spanish has taught me to be a more empathetic and open-minded person. Thank you so much for your kindness and your joy!”



ABRAHAM PEARLMAN

Teacher: Ms. Donat
Book: *The Director* by
Daniel Kehlmann

“Thank you for inspiring me to become a more responsible citizen and for helping me find meaning in learning history.”



KATHERINE RYAN

Teacher: Ms. Adair
Book: *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* by August Wilson

“Thank you for instilling in me academic confidence, resilience, and a love for math.”



ANNA SMORAGIEWICZ

Teacher: Ms. Genakos
Book: *Lab Girl* by Hope Jahren

“Thank you for making me curious about the world and showing me that learning can be fun. You are my inspiration for wanting to go into teaching.”



NICOLAS SOLIS-NEGRON

Teacher: Mr. O'Dowd
Book: *The Disappearing Spoon* by Sam Kean

“Thank you for being an amazing teacher and for igniting my interest in biochem and medicine.”



AUSTIN SONG

Teacher: Mr. Morman
Book: *What If?* by Randall Munroe

“Your enthusiasm has always inspired me to stay curious and persistent.”



BENJAMIN STRAUSS

Teacher: Mr. Ramstedt
Book: *Lafayette in the Somewhat United States* by Sarah Vowell

“Your sheer energy and passion activated in me a dormant love for history.”



DECLAN VARGAS

Teacher: Mr. Dougher
Book: *The Boys in the Boat*
by Daniel James Brown

“Thank you for giving me great advice - both in and out of the pool.”



ANNA WHITELY

Teacher: Ms. Rhodes
Book: *Bel Canto* by Ann Patchett

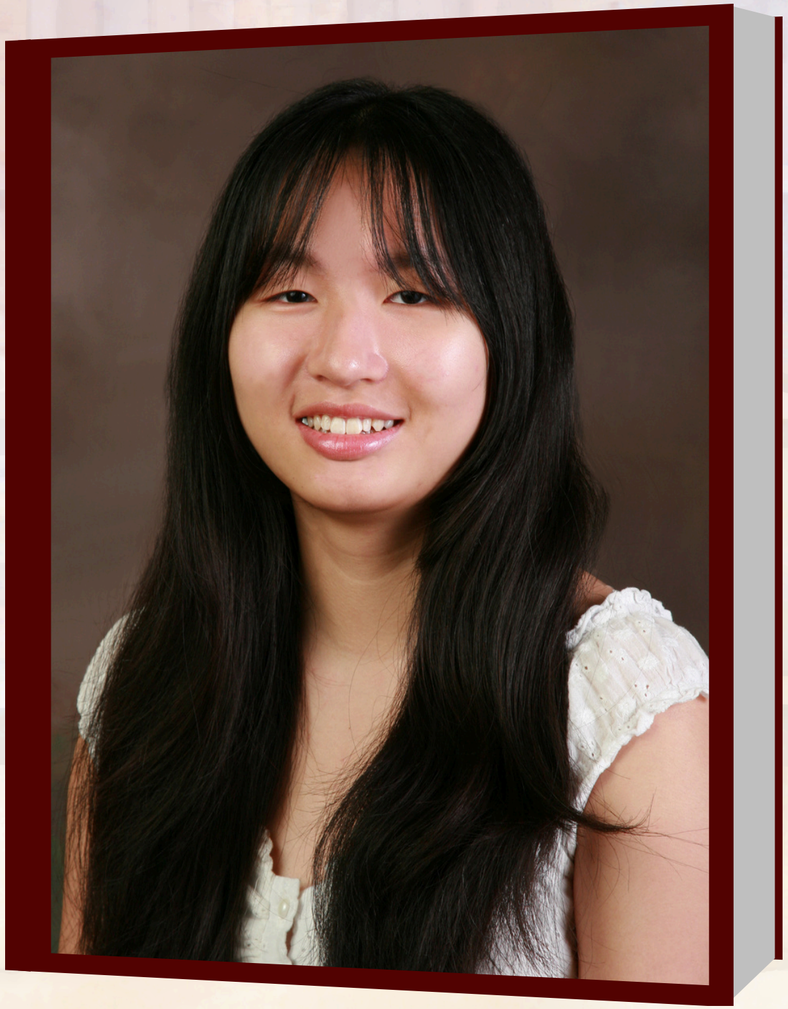
“Thank you for encouraging me to push myself musically and out of my shell.”



JENNIFER ZHOU

Teacher: Ms. Travaille
Book: *Quantum Biology: A Glimpse into the Future of Medicine* by Geoffrey W. Guy

“Thank you for sparking my enthusiasm for science and for getting me interested in my future career.”



COLEMAN SABOL

Unable to attend tonight's presentation, but would like to recognize Mr. Morman as a teacher who has made an impact in his educational journey.



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