

RFH Student Named Semifinalist in the 2027 National Merit® Scholarship Program

On Monday, September 8, RFH senior Cooper Barrett was named one of more than 16,000 Semifinalists in the 72nd annual National Merit Scholarship Program, run by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC®). Semifinalists, academically talented high school seniors, can continue in the competition for about 6,700 National Merit Scholarships worth approximately \$24 million, which will be offered next spring. To be considered for a Merit Scholarship® award, Semifinalists must fulfill several requirements to advance to the Finalist level of the competition. About 95 percent of the Semifinalists are expected to attain Finalist standing, and approximately half of the Finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar® title.

Over 1.2 million juniors in approximately 20,000 high schools entered the 2027 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2025 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. The number of Semifinalists in a state is proportional to the state's percentage of the national total of graduating seniors. To become a Finalist, the Semifinalist and a high school official must submit a detailed scholarship application, in which they provide information about the Semifinalist's academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. A Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT® or ACT® scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test. From over 16,000 Semifinalists, more than 15,000 are expected to advance to the Finalist level, and in February they will be notified of this designation.

In addition to Cooper's semifinalist qualification, 12 additional RFH students (listed below) have been named Commended Students in the 2027 National Merit Scholarship. A *Letter of Commendation* from the school and NMSC® will be presented to these scholastically talented seniors. About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the 2027 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, Commended Students placed among the top 50,000 students who entered the 2027 competition by taking the 2025 PSAT/NMSQT®.

According to a spokesperson for the NMSC®, "These students represent a valuable national resource; recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of educational excellence in our nation." The entire RFH community is extremely proud of all recognized students for their commitment to academic excellence and wishes Cooper the best of luck with his application for selection as a finalist and potential scholarship recipient.

Commended Students:

- Alexis Brisman
- Daly Connolly
- Ellery Donohue
- Josie Fine
- Kaitlyn Hathaway
- Noah Hershey
- Tyler Marino
- Peter McEvilly
- Sydney Schirripa
- Tessa Walz
- Sloane Welle
- Dylan Zwas

(picture below)



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