

## **School Board Recognitions**

### **National Merit Scholars**

Denton ISD has a storied history of academic rigor that places our students among the best in the state and nation. Each year the College Board recognizes National Merit Scholars for their performance on college-level exams and, while there is no monetary gift associated with the award, their scores most often earn students course credit that helps with tuition at some of the country's most prestigious universities.

The National Merit Scholarship program identifies the country's academic elite, and is based on a student's performance on the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT). Denton ISD has produced 42 National Merit Semi-finalist in the past 16 years.

Two members of Guyer High School's Class of 2019 has been chosen out of 1.6 million total entrants to be a semi-finalist scholar in the National Merit Scholarship Program for this year's graduating class. Seniors Gabriel Lee and Sarah Spivey join an elite pool of just 7,600 National Merit Semifinalists in the entire country.

High school students are selected into the program based on their top scores on the 2016 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). More than 34,000 students throughout the nation are recognized for their exceptional academic promise and deemed commended scholars.

Although they will not continue in the competition for further National Merit awards, they place among the top five percent of the students who entered the competition by taking the exam. The district's Class of 2018 posted 21 commended scholars including:

Denton High: Jeremy Clark-McKay, Yvette Han, Haining Liu, Jacob Maltz, Kesavan Srivillputhur, Gabriela Upchurch, Caden Young

Guyer High: Rachel Brandt, Stephanie Cho, Cole Foreman, Michael Franklin, Adam Gebhart, Jeanhyun Kim, Rebecca Mueller, Aidan Wood

The district also had three students who received recognition as National Hispanic Scholars or National Achievement Scholars. They include Calista Martin from Denton High; Isabella Plaza and Karen Ramirez from Guyer High; and Isabel Balabuch from Ryan High. The National Merit program recognizes students that are at-least one-quarter Hispanic or Latino and are among the top 5,000 high scoring individuals on the PSAT/NMSQT exam.

The National Merit Scholarship program was founded in 1955 to identify and honor scholastically talented American youth and to encourage them to develop their abilities to the fullest.

### **Educator Spotlight**

When Ami Ware, librarian at Providence Elementary, gets an idea to improve instruction on campus, she just goes for it. So, when she had an idea find funding for a STEM initiative, she wrote her first grant. She never expected to earn \$10,000 from Project Lead the Way. Today, the library's repurposed computer lab is a hub of activity that you need to see to believe, and that's why Ms. Ware is this month's Denton ISD Educator Spotlight.

## **Community Spotlight – Mac’n Cheese Festival**

As two Denton ISD graduates and local restaurant owners, John Williams (Oak Street) and Corey Bobbitt (Komodo Loco), could not stand the thought of students not being able to pay off their lunch balances. Their solution? The Mac’n Cheese Festival of Denton was born and became the hottest ticket in town. After posting online, the event’s tickets sold out within days.

On Oct. 28, thousands voted for the best macaroni and cheese sample prepared by 32 local restaurants and organizations. An afternoon of fun has now reaped \$4,500 which is now clearing student’s balances and helping hundreds of students across the district.

Participants included: Komodo Loco, Caskey’s Bar & Grill, Halley King, Mulberry Street Cantina, Access Bank Texas, Dot’s Hop House, Guaranty Bank & Trust, Sweetwater Grill, Dusty’s Bar & Grill, Game Changers Sports Arcade, II Charlie’s Bar & Grill, Armadillo Aleworks, Bone Daddy’s, Denton Elk’s Lodge 2446, Q’s, Mellow Mushroom, Lucky Lou’s, Warren Dane of Anderson Spector & Co., East Side, Bet the House BBQ, Bolivar St. BBQ, Greenhouse Restaurant, Juicy Pig Barbecue, 940’s Kitchen, Cartwright’s Ranch House, The Loophole, Local Pint, Horny Toad Café, The Chestnut Tree, Ten: One Artisan Cheese, Milpa Kitchen, Denton Co. Brewing Company, The Bearded Monk, Andy’s, Paschall Bar.