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Five Chino Valley USD Seniors Recognized as National Merit Scholarship Program Semifinalists

One senior from Chino Hills High School and four from Ayala High School will have the opportunity to compete for 6,870 National Merit Scholarships estimated to be worth \$26 million dollars.

Chino, CA – On September 11, 2024, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), a non-profit organization that honors the nation's scholastically gifted students, recognized five Chino Valley Unified School District high school seniors as Semifinalists in the 70th annual National Merit Scholarship Program competition. Ryan Chao, Caden Hong, Ethan Kim, and Cole Mattison of Ayala High School, and Alec Enfijian of Chino Hills High School earned this prestigious distinction after receiving a qualifying score on their 2023 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) during their junior year in high school.

Established in 1955, the competition is open to all U.S. high school students who meet published participation requirements and provides students the opportunity to qualify for pivotal post-secondary scholarships. 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 screening 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. Using the NMSC Selection Index to identify each state's Semifinalist allocation, Ryan, Caden, Ethan, Cole, and Alex are among approximately 2,000 students selected in the state of California.

To move forward in the competition and progress to a Finalist standing, each of our Semifinalists must meet several program criteria that include enrolling full-time in a college or university following their high school graduation, earning the recommendation of their high school principal, completing the NMSC Online Scholarship Application (OSA), and submitting a personal essay that responds to an essay prompt that allows selection committee members the opportunity to become more acquainted with each applicant.

National Merit Scholarship winners of 2025 will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning in April and concluding in July. These scholarship recipients will join more than 382,000 other distinguished young people who have earned the Merit Scholar title. Once selected, Finalists will have the opportunity to compete for one of 2,500 National Merit Scholarships, valued at \$2,500 per award.

For more information about the National Merit Scholarship Program, please visit <https://www.nationalmerit.org/>

About Chino Valley Unified School District:

Founded in 1860, Chino Valley Unified School District serves approximately 26,000 students across 36 schools within the Chino Valley and South Ontario areas. Home to 18 California Distinguished schools, students receive a rigorous, 21st century education in preparation for college and career. Thriving performing arts and athletic programs, nationally recognized marching bands and engaging parent-school

partnerships distinguish Chino Valley Unified School District as one of the best school districts in California. For more information about Chino Valley Unified School district, please visit www.chino.k12.ca.us.

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