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**Northwest**  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**News Release**

For Immediate Release  
February 11, 2016

## **Four NISD Students Named National Merit Finalists**

Northwest High School senior Andrew Smith and Byron Nelson High School seniors Matthew Giuffrida, Ryan Wheeler and Brendan Woodcock have been selected among the approximately 15,000 students to advance as finalists in the 61<sup>st</sup> annual National Merit Scholarship Program. They will have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,400 National Merit Scholarships worth approximately \$32 million that will be offered in April. About 90 percent of the semifinalists achieve finalist standing, and more than half of the finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the title of Merit Scholar.

Approximately 1.5 million juniors in more than 22,000 high schools enter the 2016 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2014 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). To achieve finalists status, they must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by the high school principal, and earn SAT scores that confirms their earlier performance on the qualifying test.

Northwest High School's Andrew Smith is a member of the football and track teams, National Honor Society, and serves as his class parliamentarian and on the student council. Byron Nelson High School senior Brendan Woodcock is a member of the National Honor Society and enrolled in the Academy of Biomedical Sciences. He's a member of the state recognized soccer team at Byron Nelson High School. Matthew Giuffrida, senior at Byron Nelson High School, is on the wrestling team, a member of the Spanish Honor Society and Technology Student Association where he has won fourth in the state competition and is an AP Scholar with Honor. Byron Nelson High School senior Ryan Wheeler is a member of the basketball team, National Honor Society and Young Men's Service League.

Winners of the National Merit Scholarship will be announced in April. These scholarship recipients will join more than 308,000 students with the title of Merit Scholar.

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Photographs included. (BNHS\_NatMeritSemi left to right: Matthew Giuffrida, Ryan Wheeler, Brendan Woodcock) and Smith\_NHS