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The Brunswick News/File

The setting sun colored the sky over Glynn County Stadium as GA seniors marched onto the field to graduate last spring.

Local students named National Merit Scholarship semifinalists

By **LAUREN MCDONALD**
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Five local students are in the running this year to earn National Merit Scholarship recognition and scholarships.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation recently announced the names of nearly 16,000 semifinalists in this year's National Merit Scholarship Program.

Local semifinalists include Adam Elsharkawi and Andrew Kaminer of Frederica Academy, Liam Nunn at Brunswick High Schools, and Nolan Hartley and James Mallette at Glynn Academy.

These seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 7,500 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$30 million that 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.

"The National Merit Scholarship Program honors individual students who show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies," according to a press release.

High school juniors entered the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2020 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. The nationwide pool of semifinalists, representing less than 1% 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.

About 15,000 semifinalists are expected to advance to the finalist level, and in February they will be notified of this designation. All National Merit Scholarship winners will be selected from this group of finalists. Merit Scholar designees are selected on the basis of their skills, accomplishments and potential for success in rigorous college studies.

Three types of National Merit Scholarships will be offered in the spring of 2022. Every finalist will compete for one of 2,500 National Merit \$2,500 scholarships that will be awarded on a state-representational basis. About 1,000 corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards will be provided by nearly 220 corporations and business organizations for finalists who meet their specified criteria.

In addition, about 180 colleges and universities are expected to finance some 4,000 college-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards for finalists who will attend the sponsor institution.

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