

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Jon Sasser
Communications Manager
817-490-5736; jsasser@westlake-tx.org

Ginger Awtry
Communications and Community Affairs Director
817-490-5719; gawtry@westlake-tx.org



Westlake Academy Students Earn National Merit and AP Honors

Westlake, Texas – October 5, 2018 –Westlake Academy is once again reaching new heights, this time with several students gaining nationwide recognition with National Merit and Advanced Placement (AP) Honors. This year, 43 students have been recognized as AP Scholars which includes 15 traditional scholars, 22 scholars with distinction, and 6 scholars with honors. 43 is a record number of students for the Academy.

An AP Scholar is determined when a student scores a 3 or higher on three AP exams. To earn AP with honors, students receive an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams. And to earn the title of Distinction, students must have an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

Westlake Academy is also home this year to two National Merit Semi-finalists, six National Merit Commended, and one National Hispanic Scholar.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), whose goal is to honor academically talented U.S. high school students, have provided more than 423,000 scholarships worth more than \$1.7 billion. This year 16,000 students nationwide were recently notified that they qualified as National Merit finalists. Only semifinalists are eligible to continue along in the stringent scholarship competition.

“The students are evaluated in addition to their PSAT score, their SAT score, they’ll have to complete an application, their grades will be evaluated, they’ll submitting an essay along with letters of recommendation”, says Westlake Academy College Counselor Carl Tippen.

The numbers for the AP program are equally impressive. 179 students participated in the AP program while taking a total of 331 exams. A whopping 62% of the class of 2019 at Westlake Academy are AP Scholars, leading the school to more than doubling its number of AP scholars with distinction in just one year.

Both the AP Scholars and National Merit honorees were recognized during recent Board of Trustees and Town Council meetings.

Westlake senior Samuel Jung was recognized twice at the meetings for being both an AP Scholar with distinction and a National Merit Semi-Finalist. “The IB teaching really fits in well with the AP teaching, we just gear towards the AP style of answering the questions because we’re already aware of the content.”

Senior Connor Kraska was honored as a National Merit Commended Scholar as well as an AP scholar with distinction. “With the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum, it’s a balancing act to juggle the AP courses with the IB Diploma Programme (DP) courses. It’s a lot to handle but the teachers here at Westlake Academy have prepared us really well to handle the large course loads.”

Despite the huge positive progression from last year, Westlake Academy staff continues to look for ways to further improve. “We’re still sending teachers to the AP institutes over the summer. We’re also focusing on more specific AP assessment practice. Plus, we’re coaching teachers to allow for enough review time for their students prior to them taking the exams – all to blend our main IB curriculum with a successful combination of AP”, says DP Coordinator, Dr. James Owen.

For more information about the NMSC, [please visit their website](#). And, to learn more about the AP Scholars program, [click here](#).

Photo ID (l to r):

WA Executive Director Dr. Mechelle Bryson, seniors Alisha Somani, Trevor Adkins (Semi-Finalist), Samuel Jung (Semi-Finalist), Nick Bellinger, Sahejbir Bhatia, Sophia Carino, Connor Kraska, Anishka Peter, Nick Robinson, and Mayor Laura Wheat

###

Westlake Academy (WA) is a community-owned, public charter school, serving grades K-12, offering all three rigorous International Baccalaureate (IB) programs. Founded in 2003, its mission is to provide students with an internationally minded education of the highest quality, so they are well-balanced and respectful life-long learners. WA inspires college-bound students to achieve their highest individual potential in a nurturing environment that fosters the traits found in the IB Learner Profile. Westlake received the first open enrollment charter ever awarded to a municipality in Texas and today, the town owns and operates one of the leading public charter schools in the United States. Celebrating its 15th year anniversary, Westlake Academy is located at 2600 J.T. Ottinger Road, Westlake, TX 76262. Call 817-490-5757, visit WestlakeAcademy.org, or email Info@WestlakeAcademy.org for more information.