

# THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH ORANGE & MAPLEWOOD

## **BOARD RECOGNITION** **PUBLIC BOARD MEETING** October 21, 2013

SOMSD was awarded a **three-year, \$1.5 million grant through the U.S. Department of Education's Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP)**. The award is the largest in the history of the grant program to a New Jersey school district, the first time a New Jersey school district has been awarded the grant twice, and the only PEP grant to a New Jersey school district this year.

Congratulations to **Judy LoBianco, Supervisor of Health, Physical Education, and Nursing Services**, and her talented staff for their outstanding past work, and for this new opportunity to advance the health and wellness of all of our students.

Thank you also to our partners – **South Mountain YMCA, YouthNet, the Maplewood Recreation Department and the South Orange Recreation Department** – for joining us in this initiative.

The grant will be used to further develop SOMSD's, nationally-recognized physical education program and create a culture of physical activity throughout the community. More information about the grant is available on the District website.

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### **2013-2014** Columbia High School *National Merit Scholar Semifinalists*

The **National Merit Scholarship Program** has announced that two Columbia High School students were selected as semifinalists in the **59<sup>th</sup> annual National Merit Scholarship** competition. Included are:

**Christopher Painter**  
**Ellie Wren-Hardin**

These scholastically talented students have an opportunity to continue in the competition and vie for Merit Scholarship awards offered in the spring. Approximately 16,000 semifinalists were selected out of the 1.5 million juniors who entered. Students attained semifinalist status by scoring exceptionally high on the 2012 PSAT, taken at the beginning of their junior year. New Jersey's cut-off to become a semifinalist is the second highest in the country.

New Jersey has approximately 500 public and 150 private high schools and less than 23 percent of these schools had any Merit Scholar Semifinalists at all.

*National Merit Scholar Commended Students*  
2013-2014

The **National Merit Scholarship Corporation** awarded **Letters of Commendation** to twenty-one Columbia High School seniors in the **2014 Merit Program**. They include:

**Basile Antoine**  
**Brett Ascher**  
**Jonathan Donald**  
**Jordan Donald**  
**Chloe Fogelson**  
**Noah Kambili**  
**Christopher Kearns-McCoy**  
**Jasper Kensinger**  
**Elijah Kushen**  
**Conor Love**  
**Mae Moloney**

**Ryan Morey**  
**Ifunanya Okafor**  
**Glynnis Olin**  
**Bryce Peterson**  
**Jessica Petrow-Cohen**  
**Benjamin Sender**  
**Peter Smith**  
**Maxwell Stone**  
**Matthew Vandusen-Gross**  
**William Woodiel**

These students, along with 34,000 seniors across the country, were recognized for their exceptional academic promise and the high scores they received on the PSAT taken in their junior year.

*National Achievement Scholar Semifinalists*

The **2014 National Achievement Scholarship Program**, part of the **National Merit Scholarship Corporation**, named three Columbia High School students as semifinalists in the **National Achievement Scholarship Competition**. In its 59<sup>th</sup> year, just over 1,600 black high school seniors were named semifinalists and will have the opportunity to vie for 800 scholarships. This special recognition is based on the very high scores achieved on the PSAT taken in their junior year. Included are:

**Jordan Donald**  
**Noah Kambili**  
**Ifunanya Okafor**

*National Achievement Scholar Outstanding Participants*

The **2014 National Achievement Scholarship Program**, part of the **National Merit Scholarship Corporation**, named four Columbia High School seniors as **Outstanding Participants Referred to U.S. Colleges and Universities**. These students scored in the top three percent of the more than 160,000 Black Americans who took the 2012 PSAT. Chosen were:

**Olivia Baker**  
**Lanrewaj Danmola**

**Tedra James**  
**Jonathan Mevs**

*National Hispanic Recognition Program*

The **2014 National Hispanic Recognition Program** named four Columbia High School seniors as **Scholars/Honorable Mention Referred to U.S. Colleges and Universities**. This year, the NHRP is recognizing nearly 5,000 selected students from a pool of over 200,000 students who took the 2012 PSAT and identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino. They are as follows:

**Alexandra Viqueira** – *Scholar*  
**Jordan Avello** – *Scholar*

**Jared Lebron** – *Scholar*  
**Natalia Fuenzalida** – *Honorable  
Mention*

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Ten Columbia High School students representing four languages – French, Italian, Spanish, and an English Language Learner (ELL) category – participated in **William Paterson's 30th Annual Foreign Language Poetry Recitation Contest**.

Approximately 800 students representing over 50 schools from New Jersey competed in 9 different languages in the contest. Of the ten students, rising senior, **Jean Didier Ernest** earned **first place** in the **French Native** category. Mr. Pham is Jean's French III teacher.

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25 of Columbia High School's top Science students participated in the **Annual Merck State Science Day Test (63 teams)**. The team took **3rd place** in **Essex County** for the overall score.

**Bret Ascher**  
**Jacob Bard**  
**Ysa Borstel**  
**Chioma Ekedede**  
**Sophia Eller**  
**Maya Joyce**  
**Chris Kearns-McCoy**  
**Zachary Knowles**  
**Marc LaTaillade**  
**Rachel Martel**  
**Alex Mayer**  
**Neil Miller**  
**Rachel O'Keefe**

**Bryce Peterson**  
**Savannah Porcelli**  
**Katherine Poulos**  
**Adam Richardson**  
**Tess Ruranga**  
**Ezekiel Sandor**  
**Victoria Schafer**  
**Lev Schechter**  
**Theresa Seelbach**  
**Ben Sender**  
**Peter Smith**  
**Jonah Williams**

The CHS Science League team was **4<sup>th</sup>** in the state of NJ for **Physics C**.

**Sophia Eller**  
**Isabel Gibson**  
**Zachary Knowles**  
**Alex Mayer**  
**Adam Richardson**

**Victoria Schafer**  
**Russell Wong**  
**Emily Yu**  
**Saif Zaman**

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Seth Boyden 1st Grade Teacher, **Miriam Tager**, was selected to present her academic paper at the annual meeting of **American Educational Studies Association (AESA)**. Her paper, "**A Critical Look at the Globalization of Developmentally Appropriate Practices in Early Childhood Education**," will be presented on November 1st at their conference in Baltimore, MD. Ms. Tager is currently a Ph.D. candidate at CUNY Graduate Center.

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Columbia High School Physical Education & Health Teacher, **Pat Hurley**, will be a presenter at the **2013 NJEA Convention** in Atlantic City on November 8, 2013. Ms. Hurley will present on the topic, *LGBTQ: What Does It All Mean*. This Professional Development Session is an informational and experiential workshop designed for open dialogue with the presenter.

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