

**BOARD OF EDUCATION OF HARFORD COUNTY  
RECOGNITION**

**2010 NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP SEMI-FINALISTS**

**November 23, 2009**

**Background Information:**

The National Merit<sup>®</sup> Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships that began in 1955. High school students enter the National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT<sup>®</sup>) – a test which serves as an initial screen of approximately 1.5 million entrants each year – and by meeting published program entry/participation requirements. The nationwide pool of semifinalists, which represents less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest entrants in each state. The finalists for this year's National Merit Scholarship Program will be announced in February 2010.

**Discussion:**

The National Merit Scholarship Program has announced the nation's 2010 semi-finalists, including three students from Harford County Public School (HCPS). These three students are Carlos Arguero, senior in the Science & Mathematics Academy at Aberdeen High School; Conner Morrison, senior in the Science & Mathematics Academy at Aberdeen High School; and Alex Hutcheson, senior at C. Milton Wright High School, who also was a finalist for the Maryland Distinguished Scholar program.

Carlos Arguero has achieved AP Scholar with Honors, is on the distinguished honor roll, has earned the Presidential Award for Academic Excellence and is a National Hispanic Recognition Program Scholar. He is currently a member of the National Honor Society and the Spanish Honor Society. Maintaining a 4.0+ grade point average his entire educational career, Carlos has excelled in both mathematics and science and is skilled in electrical and mechanical engineering. He has experience constructing and operating robots and knowledge of computer programming. Carlos is working on his capstone project at the Science and Math Academy, *Bus Route Optimization: Development of a Graphical User Interface (GUI)*, which consists of developing a graphical interface that will allow potential users to view and manipulate data relevant to bus routes, with the ultimate goal of actual application for route optimization. Carlos is slated to graduate in spring 2010 and will pursue a degree in mechanical or electrical engineering.

Conner Morrison is currently enrolled in AP Calculus, AP Psychology, AP English and Honors Physics. He has years experience with computer programming in multiple languages including C, C++, C#, java and java script. Conner has also studied other areas of interest, including graphic design, aesthetics and literature analysis. He is working on his capstone project at the Science and Math Academy, the creation of a data management system for use in bus route optimization, which is a subproject of the Bus Route Optimization Project. It will be based on manipulation, storage, and retrieval of raw data and route data. When Conner graduates, he will pursue a double major in computer science and philosophy.

Alex Hutcheson has a 4.20 GPA and is ranked second out of 402 students in his class. He is an AP scholar with distinction, having taken six advanced placement courses and scoring five out of five on all six exams. He is a member of the National Honor Society, the Student

Government Association, the Senior Class Council, the Concert Band/Marching Band/Pep Band, the Cross Country team, the indoor and outdoor track teams and the German National Honor Society. Alex is also very active in the community, currently serving as Junior Assistant Scoutmaster in the Boy Scouts for America.

**Superintendent's Recommendation:**

The Superintendent recommends the Board of Education of Harford County commend Carlos Arguero, Conner Morrison and Alex Hutcheson for their significant achievements. The Superintendent further recommends the Board wish them continued success in their educational careers.