

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI-NR 2015-47

Tuesday, May 5, 2015

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Two Wisconsin students named Presidential Scholars

MADISON — Two students from Wisconsin are among 141 high school seniors named 2015 Presidential Scholars in recognition of their educational, artistic, and civic accomplishments.

Wisconsin recipients are **Nicholas V. Ngo** of De Pere High School and **Alethia M. Tilford**, Ronald Reagan College Preparatory High School, Milwaukee. The honorees will travel to Washington, D.C., for recognition activities, including a ceremony at the White House on June 21, where they will receive the Presidential Scholars Medallion.

Teachers, who the scholars named as being most inspiring and challenging, will also be honored at the ceremony. Ngo named Becky Hawley, a high school English teacher who has been with the De Pere School District for 23 years, as his most influential teacher. Tilford named Stacy Knetter, her high school biology teacher, as her most influential teacher. The educators will receive Teacher Recognition Awards from the U.S. Department of Education.

“The Presidential Scholars program is one of the nation’s highest honors and most prestigious awards for graduating high school seniors,” said State Superintendent Tony Evers. “This recognition represents years of hard work and achievements by the student, their teachers, and supportive families. Congratulations to these students and their influential teachers.”

The 2015 Presidential Scholars were chosen from a pool of more than 4,300 candidates determined by outstanding performance on the College Board SAT and ACT exams, and through nominations made by Chief State School Officers or the National YoungArts Foundation’s nationwide YoungArts competition. Candidates were evaluated on the basis of their academic success, essays, artistic excellence, community service, leadership skills, and commitment to high ideals. Members of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars made the final selection of Presidential Scholars. The 51st class of U.S. Presidential Scholars is comprised of one young man and one young woman from each state, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and from U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 at-large recipients and 20 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts.

The Presidential Scholars award was established in 1964. Since that time, the program has recognized almost 7,000 of the nation’s top-performing students for their academic and artistic achievement.

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