

**From:** South Carolina Department of Education <info@ed.sc.gov>  
**To:** Adams, ChaneyChaneyAdams@gov.sc.gov  
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## Spearman Announces U.S. Presidential Scholars Semifinalists

Columbia, SC – State Superintendent of Education Molly M. Spearman announces that 10 South Carolina students have been named semifinalists for the prestigious U.S. Presidential Scholars Program.

"I am excited for these students as they continue forward in this competition," said Spearman. "They represent a very bright future for our state, and their families, communities, and school districts should be very proud of this distinction," said Spearman.

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964 to recognize the nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. In 1979, the program was expanded to include students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, creative, and performing arts. This year, the program was expanded to include students in career and technical education fields (CTE). Up to 161 students are selected annually as U.S. Presidential Scholars, based on academic achievement and exceptional performance on the SAT or ACT.

Scholars are recognized with an all-expense paid trip to the nation's capital in June as part of the recognition program. They are awarded the Presidential Scholars Medallion at a ceremony sponsored by the White House.

Here are South Carolina's semifinalists:

Hamza M. Ahmed

South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics

Thomas L. Birdsong

Irmo High School

Lexington-Richland Five

Elizabeth A. Farrar

River Bluff High School

Lexington One

Danielle Lodge \*

Summerville High School

Dorchester Two

\* recommended for Scholar as a CTE candidate

Jessica L. Marlow

Dorman High School

Spartanburg Six

Jonathan J. Michala

Eastside High School

Greenville District

Lauren B. Schexnayder

Myrtle Beach High School

Horry County Schools

Nathaniel J. Schlosser

Academic Magnet High School

Katherine Woo \*\*

Riverside High School

Greenville District

\*\* recommended for Scholar in the Arts

Karen R. Zhao

Riverside High School

Greenville District

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All students graduate prepared for success in college, careers, and citizenship. By 2018, at least one school in every district will have implemented personalized learning that supports students' meeting the [Profile of the South Carolina Graduate](#).

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South Carolina Department of Education | 1429 Senate Street | Columbia | SC | 29201

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