

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

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SIX NEBRASKA STUDENTS NAMED SEMIFINALISTS FOR 2010 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Six students from Lincoln and Omaha area high schools have been named semifinalists in the 2010 United States Presidential Scholars program.

The students are:

- Maesen Churchill, Lincoln East High School
- Thomas Gilgenast, Creighton Preparatory School
- Brooke Helmberger, Papillion-LaVista High School
- Grace Lyden, Westside High School
- Andrew Martin, Elkhorn High School
- Wyatt Troia, Creighton Preparatory School

The Nebraska students are among about 560 national semifinalists. High school seniors are chosen for their accomplishments in many areas — academic and artistic success, leadership and involvement in school and community. Each year up to 141 students are chosen from the outstanding seniors nationwide to become Presidential Scholars, one of the nation's highest honors for high school seniors.

"Through hard work and a commitment to education excellence, these outstanding Nebraska high school seniors have set themselves on a path filled with endless opportunities. I am confident each senior will make all of Nebraska proud of their continued achievements as they move to college and to the careers of their choice. The goal of Nebraska educators is to help all students build an educational foundation that will offer them these same opportunities. On behalf of all Nebraska educators, I congratulate each of you on your success," Nebraska Education Commissioner Roger Breed said.

The 2010 U. S. Presidential Scholars were selected from approximately 3.2 million high school seniors nationally. About 3,000 of those seniors were identified as candidates for the program based on their exceptional SAT or ACT scores. The 560 semifinalists were chosen from that pool of high school seniors. The finalists will consist of up to 121 academic scholars and as many as 20 arts scholars. They will be recognized in Washington, D.C., in June, during National Recognition Week.

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 recognize seniors who demonstrate exceptional scholarship and talent in the visual, creative and performing arts.