

To: Robert Malay, Superintendent
Daniel Black, Assistant Superintendent

From: Kimberly Baker, Keene High School Director of Guidance and Counseling

Re: **KHS National Merit Semifinalist**

Date: September 28, 2015

**KEENE HIGH SCHOOL
PRESS RELEASE
September 28, 2015**

James Logan, Principal of Keene High School, is pleased to announce that two students have been named as semifinalists in the 61st annual National Merit Scholarship Program as a result of scoring in the top 1% of more than 1.5 million juniors nationally who took the 2014 Preliminary SAT. Earning this distinction are Sara Gorske daughter of Andrew and Julie Gorske and Sage Wentzell-Brehme daughter of Christopher Brehme and Kristina Wentzell all of Keene.

Semifinalists will compete for some 7,400 National Merit Scholarship awards worth over \$32 million that will be offered next spring. Founded in 1955 to conduct the annual Merit Scholarship competition, NMSC is a not-for-profit corporation that operates without government assistance. Scholarships awarded through the Merit Program are underwritten by nearly 440 business organizations and higher education institutions, as well as the NMSC's own funds. These sponsors share NMSC's goals of honoring scholastically able young men and women and promoting interest in academic excellence. The nationwide pool of semifinalists was designated on a state representational basis; the number of semifinalists in each state is based on its percentage of the national total of graduating high school seniors. Semifinalists are the highest scoring entrants in each state and represent less than one percent of the state's seniors.

The next step for these semifinalist is to fulfill requirements to advance to finalist standing, a prerequisite for consideration for a Merit Scholarship award. To become a finalist, a semifinalist must have an outstanding high school academic record, participation in school and community activities, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and submit SAT scores that confirm their earlier qualifying test performance. Merit Scholar designees are selected on the basis of their accomplishments, skills, and potential for success in rigorous college studies, without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, or religious preference. The Merit Scholarship winners of 2016 will be announced in four nationwide news releases beginning in April and concluding in July.