PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PGCPS STUDENTS RECOGNIZED IN
2010 NATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT AND MERIT
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Seven Prince George’s County Public School students from Eleanor Roosevelt High School are winners in the 2010 National Achievement and National Merit Scholarship Programs. More than 160,000 African American high school seniors nationwide competed for the National Achievement Scholarship and 800 will share more than $2 million in scholarships for undergraduate study.

Approximately 15,000 students competed for the National Merit Scholarship, and at the conclusion of this year’s program, more than 8,000 students will receive scholarships totaling over $36 million.

Reese Fuller, Fayola Fears, Benjamin Shaibu and Blossom Tewelde of Eleanor Roosevelt High School were among the 800 who earned the $2,500 National Achievement Scholarship. All finalists in the 2010 competition were considered for these single-payment scholarships, which were awarded on a regional basis.

“I am very proud of the students from Eleanor Roosevelt High School,” said Dr. William R. Hite, Jr., Superintendent of Schools. “These outstanding scholars are great examples to their peers that they too can achieve at such a high level.”

Students entered the 2010 National Achievement Program by requesting consideration when they took the 2008 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) as high school juniors. Last September, approximately 1,600 of the highest scorers were selected as semifinalists in each region. Approximately 1,300 of these semifinalists were selected to advance to the finalist level for having the strongest record of academic accomplishments and greatest potential for academic success in college. Finalists had to provide a record of high academic performance throughout high school, a recommendation from the school principal, and submit a self-descriptive essay.

This year marks the 46th annual academic competition for high school students. The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, conducts the programs. More than 30,300
students have received Achievement Scholarship awards totaling more than $95 million since the inception of the program.

Blossom Tewelde of Eleanor Roosevelt High School was also selected for the National Merit Scholarship. All finalists also competed for this award.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), a not-for-profit organization, began conducting this program in 1955. More than 1.5 million juniors in nearly 22,000 high schools entered the 2008 National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screening of program entrants.

To be considered for a Merit Scholarship award, semifinalists must advance to the finalist level of the competition by fulfilling several requirements. About 90 percent (15,000) of the semifinalists are expected to attain finalist standing, and approximately half of the finalists will be selected as Merit Scholarship winners, earning the Merit Scholar ® title.

Thomas Senecal of Eleanor Roosevelt High School was selected for the Corporate-sponsored National Merit Mary E. Beyerle Scholarship, joining about 1,000 scholars who earned corporate-sponsored scholarships. Most corporate-sponsored scholarships are renewable and provide stipends from $500 to $10,000 per year. However, a few provide a single payment between $2,500 and $5,000.

Senecal was selected from students who advanced to the Finalist level in the National Merit Scholarship competition and who met the criteria of their scholarship sponsors. Corporate sponsors provide National Merit Scholarships for Finalists who are children of their employees, residents of communities the company serves or who plan to pursue college majors or careers the grantor wishes to encourage.

Laura Jones and Jeffrey Wang of Eleanor Roosevelt High School were selected for the College-sponsored National Merit University of Maryland Scholarship. These students are among the 8,400 high school seniors of 2010 who will receive National Merit Scholarships totaling $36 million for college undergraduate study.

Each sponsor college selected their scholarship winners from the finalist in the 2010 National Merit Scholarship Program who plan to attend their institution. This award provides between $500 and $2,000 annually for up to four years.