

Six High School Seniors Named Greenville County Students of the Year

Each spring, Greenville County Schools names Students of the Year — the senior or seniors with the highest SAT score or highest ACT score. This year, six students received the prestigious title.

Hannah Chen from Riverside High and Valedictorian Natasha Deshpande from Mauldin High scored a perfect 2400 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). Irina Danescu and Amy Li from Riverside High, and MingZhe Lin and Valedictorian Angela Luo from Southside High Academy scored 35 out of a possible 36 points on the American College Test (ACT) to be named Students of the Year.

Students of the Year Based on SAT Score:

About Hannah Xi Chen from Riverside High

Riverside High's Hannah Chen loves geometry, calculus, chemistry and physics, but says she also enjoys English and literature. Hannah credits guidance counselor William Sumerel with making sure she is prepared for college. "From playing an invaluable part in helping me transition to Riverside High School after moving from Ohio, to providing support and advice during the college application process, Mr. Sumerel has gone above and beyond his role as guidance counselor." Hannah will begin her studies at Emory University. She is the daughter of Yan Wenzhen and Jianxiong Chen.

About Natasha Girish Deshpande from Mauldin High

Natasha Deshpande has served Mauldin High School as Beta Club president and National Honor Society vice-president. She is chairman of the Spanish National Honor Society Tutoring team and participates in Indian classical dance. "My math teacher, Kaye Autry, has had a huge impact on my education. Before high school, math intimidated me. Ms Autrey taught the subject in a way I could understand, which has led to success in other classes," said Natasha. She has made plans to study chemical engineering at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Natasha is the daughter of Girish and Raj Deshpande.

Students of the Year Based on ACT Score:

About Irina Danescu from Riverside High

Irina Danescu is a National Merit Scholar whose interests include health policy and genetics. She is captain of the Academic Team and Girls' Tennis Team, and participates in Youth in Government. "YIG helped me develop my ability to speak in public and prompted me to examine my opinions on relevant social and political issues, leading to an increased awareness of the problems facing our community and nation," she said. Irina will attend Duke University where she will major in political science. She is the daughter of Radu and Mariana Danescu.

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About Amy Li from Riverside High

Hits: 6179

Amy Li loves Chemistry and biology. She participates in Speech and Debate, Youth in Government and National Honor Society, and plays the piano and tennis. "Through their constant support and sacrifices, my parents have been an inspiration for me to work hard, fulfill my potential, and maintain my optimism," said Amy. "I can't thank them enough." She will major in molecular biology at Princeton University. Amy is the daughter of Yue Xia and Dong Jie Li.

About MingZhe "Ming" Lin from Southside High Academy

Ming Lin, a Southside senior, says the International Baccalaureate (IB) program has been a tremendous benefit to his education. "The ability to take rigorous courses and get involved in a diverse environment has allowed me to expound upon my knowledge like no other program," he said. Ming participates on the Southside High Academic Team and Chess Team. He will begin his engineering studies at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the only child of Xiong and Ying Lin.

About Angela Luo from Southside High Academy

Southside High Academy senior Angela Luo learned early from her physics teacher, Tom Rogers, that "failure is not an option." He provided her with tireless support in preparation for AP exams, the science fair, and with college applications. Angela is a member of the Carolina Youth Symphony and All-State Orchestra, SAM InvenTeam/Robotics, and Tiger Ambassadors, and runs track and cross country. She will major in molecular and cellular biology when she begins her studies at Vanderbilt University. Angela is the daughter of Nianzhu and Shufang Luo.