



Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation Inc.



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**Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Student
Named as U.S. Presidential Scholar Finalist**

Silver Spring, MD—Ziyao (Chacha) Wang of Rockville, a senior in the Montgomery Blair High School Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Magnet Program, was selected on May 2 as a U.S. Presidential Scholar Finalist, one of three from the state of Maryland and 141 nationally. Fellow Blair Magnet classmate Jessica Lu of Rockville was named as a Semifinalist in the competition. Out of more than 3,300 candidates nationally, approximately 550 Semifinalists and later 141 Finalists were selected based on outstanding academic achievements, leadership, personal character, contribution to school and community, and creativity through a rigorous evaluation and review process administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

Since 1964 the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program has honored some of the nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. One male and one female representing each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Americans living abroad, as well as 15 at-large students, and up to 20 students in the arts are selected annually in May to be U.S. Presidential Scholar Finalists from the pool of Semifinalists. Wang and the other Finalists will be invited to Washington, D.C. on June 16 to receive the U.S. Presidential Scholars medallion at a recognition ceremony and to participate in various events held in their honor. Each Finalist may invite his or her most influential teacher, as well, who will receive a Teacher Recognition Award from the U.S. Department of Education.

Ziyao Wang expresses her gratitude, "It's such an exciting surprise to be named a Finalist, especially when every nominee was so deserving of this honor. Now I'm just super excited about the possibility of meeting President Obama. I want to thank our school and especially my recommender, Mrs. Weldon, for their support during the long application process. I'm really going to miss the fabulous Blair Magnet program next year; it has really given me a unique and valuable secondary education."

Blair social studies teacher and mock trial coach Ms. Stefanie Weldon, who recommended Wang for this recognition, praises Wang, "Chacha

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is that rare combination of exceptional intelligence, kindness, and humility that expresses itself in working for the greater good rather than just for herself.”

Wang will attend the University of Pennsylvania's Vagelos Life Sciences & Management Program in the fall.



2012 U.S. Presidential Scholar Finalist and Blair Magnet senior Ziyao Wang. (Photo courtesy of Wang.)

About The Montgomery Blair High School Magnet Foundation

This organization was founded by a group of concerned students, teachers, administrators, parents, and alumni in 2008. Its purpose is to promote science, mathematics, and computer science education by supporting the Magnet Program at Montgomery Blair High School in its efforts to develop resources and refine practices needed to provide a rigorous and enriched education for students, staff, and the community at large. The Foundation is incorporated in the state of Maryland and is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

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