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Two Somerville High School Students Recognized for National Achievements

Ian Born receives Gold Medal as an Alpha Scholar; Julian M. Bresler Named “Commended Student” in National Merit® Scholarship Program

Somerville, MA – The Somerville Public Schools and Somerville High School administration are incredibly proud to honor two Somerville High School students who recently received academic recognition at the national level, in competition with top national and international high school peers. SHS Junior Ian Born, and SHS Senior Julian Bresler, were both recently recognized for their respective outstanding academic achievements.

Ian Born (class of 2024) won a gold medal for his social science research paper as part of the [Alpha Scholars program through Harvard International Review at Harvard University](#). The rigorous Alpha Scholars Social Science Research Program teaches college-level research, writing, and presentation skills to high school students in support of the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals](#). Students work one-on-one with Harvard University undergraduate mentors in advanced study and research, and their work culminates in a research paper and presentation. Ian’s paper, “[Success Factors for Desalination: Qualitative Case Studies of Desalination Around the World](#),” discusses the use of the desalination process as part of a multifaceted policy solution for water security by analyzing three successfully and three unsuccessfully implemented existing plants. His paper was published and is available on the [Harvard International Review website](#).

Michael Maloney, science teacher and Science League Team mentor, commended Ian for his work ethic and dedication. “Ian has a quick mind and does extremely well in class, working to fully understand the material. He is enthusiastic, open to working in any group, and puts great effort into all activities. He helps other students enjoy the work. He really enjoys science, and seeing the connections it has to math and other areas of life,” Maloney said.

Julian M. Bresler (class of 2023), was named a Commended Student in the 2023 [National Merit Scholarship Program](#). Each year, students are eligible to enter the National Merit Scholarship Program, a competition for recognition and awards conducted by National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Students become eligible by taking and doing well on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) as high school juniors. Of the top 50,000 students from the graduating class of 2023, 16,000 students were designated Semifinalists and will continue in the Merit Scholarship competition. Julian is one of 34,000 students nationwide to receive the Commended Student recognition from a pool of approximately 1.5 million entrants among the graduating class of 2023.

In a letter to Somerville High School administrators, Kimberly C. Greiner, Executive Director of Scholarship Administration at the National Merit Scholarship Program, wrote, “Commended Students are being recognized for the exceptional academic promise demonstrated by their



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outstanding performance on the qualifying test used for program entry. We have great respect for the important part that you and your professional staff play in the development of academic excellence, and it is a genuine pleasure for NMSC to join you in honoring these talented students.” The National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and college scholarships that began in 1955.

About his achievements and his excellence at SHS, Science Teacher Susan Schmidt said, “Julian is an extraordinary student and full of great questions. He likes to engage with learning and delve deep into topics. His mind is always leaping to the next logical conclusion, finding ways to connect what he is learning to what is to come. Above all, I appreciate his good humor and integrity and his approach to working in class.”

Somerville High School is a comprehensive high school with over 1,300 students in a newly renovated and state-of-the art facility. More than 50 languages are spoken among the diverse student body. SHS has a robust College and Career Readiness program, which is part of the [SHS Counseling Department](#). They guide students from all backgrounds through the college enrollment process and prepare students who choose to enter the workforce or military directly after high school. Somerville High School prides itself on meeting the needs of all of its students.

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