



The National Association for Magnet and Theme-based Schools

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2015 National Merit Awardees Represent Best in Public Theme-Based Education

Washington, DC, March 9, 2015 - Magnet Schools of America (MSA), the national association for magnet and theme-based schools is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2015 national merit awards. These 208 public magnet schools and programs located in 14 states are recognized for their commitment to high academic standards, curriculum innovation, school diversity and integration, specialized teaching staffs, and parent and community engagement. This year 319 schools applied for national merit awards making 2015 incredibly competitive.

“The announcement of our national merit awards is an exciting time for the entire magnet school community. It is great way for our association to acknowledge the creativity, passion and dedication of so many people. Merit awards are given to our highest quality theme-based schools and programs. They are models of success and represent the best in public education,” said MSA Executive Director, Todd Mann.

To receive a national merit award, MSA member schools must submit a detailed application that is scored by a panel of educators. These schools are judged on their demonstrated ability to raise student academic achievement, promote racial and socioeconomic diversity, provide integrated curricula and instruction, and create community partnerships that enhance the school’s theme.

There are two categories of merit awards: (1) *Magnet Schools of Excellence*, the top merit award given to only a select group of magnet schools and (2) *Magnet Schools of Distinction*, the second highest award of recognition. Principals and representatives from each of the winning schools will receive a merit award plaque during an awards ceremony held at the 33rd National Conference on Magnet Schools in Raleigh, NC April 22-25, 2015.

The highest ranked magnet schools in the excellence category are eligible to receive monetary awards and the chance to be named the nation’s top Elementary, Secondary, or New & Emerging Magnet School. One of the schools of excellence will also be selected to win \$5,000 for the Dr. Ronald P. Simpson Distinguished Merit Award, which is considered the most prestigious merit award.

Magnet Schools of America was founded in 1986 and sponsors programs, events, technical assistance, and professional development. MSA supports and serves the leaders and teachers of magnet and theme-based schools, while promoting the development of new magnet programs and public schools of choice. It also connects with other professional organizations and encourages partnerships to support magnet programs.

To learn more about the national merit awards program, please visit www.magnet.edu

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MISSION STATEMENT

Providing leadership for high quality innovative instructional programs that promote choice, equity, diversity, and academic excellence for all students.