

EHS' Jonathan Stumpf, Grace Ramsey and Selin Aktuna Are Honored As National Merit Scholarship Commended Students

by Mary Ann Mitchell
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EDWARDSVILLE - Edwardsville High School senior Jonathan Stumpf has been named a 2023 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist, while fellow seniors Grace Ramsey and Selin Aktuna were named 2023 National Merit Scholarship Commended Students.

Stumpf is one of 16,000 students across the country who qualified as a semifinalist based on his PSAT/NMSQT scores in the 68th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. He will continue in the competition for some 7,250 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$28 million that will be offered next spring. To be considered for a Merit Scholarship award, a semifinalist must fulfill several requirements to advance to the finalist level of the competition. About 95 percent of the semifinalists are expected to attain a finalist standing, and approximately half of the finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship and earn the Merit Scholar title.

“This means a lot in terms of achieving something outside of the normal academic classroom that gives you recognition for the hard work you’ve put in,” said Stumpf. “It also means a lot to share this achievement with these peers around me. We’ve been in the same classes and working together for a long time.”

Although Ramsey and Aktuna will not continue in the competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, they are two of about 34,000 students throughout the nation who are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise.

“It’s a cumulation of hard work and it didn’t just come without any effort,” said Aktuna. “It’s proof that we’ve all worked hard and did the work to achieve this.”

“To share this special achievement for something we did outside of the classroom and the school is really special,” added Ramsey.

The trio also commended their teachers for helping them to earn this honor.

“The enthusiasm our teachers bring is very helpful,” said Stumpf. “When they are excited about something, we get excited about it and it’s not just homework we are doing, it’s something we are doing so we can have a discussion about it in class.”

“Our teachers are very passionate about what they do, and they make it a very positive learning environment,” said Aktuna.

“Every teacher has a true passion for what they do,” added Ramsey. They love to teach and love what they teach. That makes us more invigorated and interested in the class.”

All three are still finalizing their future plans, but Stumpf would like to do something in cyber security, while Aktuna would like to be an aerospace engineer. Ramsey enjoys biology and history and plans to pursue a career path in those areas.