

The Donoho School Newsletter

September 2011

Karen Hester, Editor

A Message from Mrs. Hurd, President of the Donoho School



CONTENTS

<i>President's Message</i>	1
<i>National Merit News</i>	2
<i>PSAT and the PLAN</i>	3
<i>A Grand Day at Donoho</i>	4
<i>County Championships</i>	4
<i>PAC and Technology</i>	5
<i>Falcons Flying High</i>	6

The 2011-2012 school year is well underway and we are off to a great beginning. We have welcomed twenty-eight new families and forty-five new students to The Donoho School family. As you may have read in an earlier edition of newsletter, our school-wide motto for this year is "Expect, Engage, Excel." We are blessed to have parents and students who appreciate and thrive in an environment of high expectations. The teachers comment daily on the unique talents and abilities of our students.



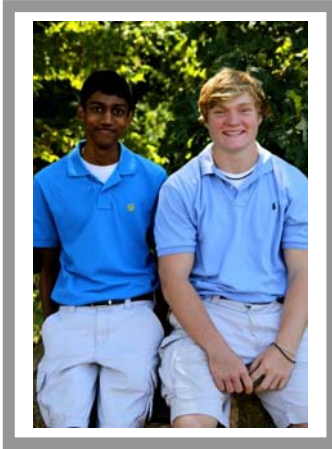
Speaking of high expectations and excellence in the classroom, I would like to congratulate Vinay Giri and Tate Thomas for their tremendous accomplishments in achieving the status of National Merit Semifinalists. Gentlemen, your teachers and fellow students admire the dedication and commitment you have made to academics in achieving this lofty goal.

I look forward to the numerous and diverse accomplishments to follow this year in academics, athletics, and the arts.

Sincerely,
Jan Hurd



National Merit Semifinalists



The Donoho School is proud to announce that seniors **Vinay Giri** and **Tate Thomas** have been named National Merit Semi-finalists by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. The National Merit Scholarship Program is an annual academic competition for recognition and scholarships that is open to all United States high school students who meet published entry requirements. The program is conducted by National Merit Scholarship Corporation, a not-for-profit organization established in 1955 that operates without government assistance. Semifinalists named in each year's Merit Scholarship competition show exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. Those who meet requirements to advance to the Finalist level compete for National Merit Scholarships supported by independent sponsor organizations and by National Merit Scholarship Corporation's own funds.

About 1.5 million students in some 22,000 high schools entered the 2012 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2010 Preliminary SAT (PSAT). The 16,000 Semifinalists that were announced on September 14, 2011, are the highest-scoring entrants in each state and **represent less than 1 percent of each state's high school seniors**. They are the only participants who qualify to continue in the competition for National Merit Scholarships to be awarded in the spring of 2012. Most Semifinalists are currently twelfth graders who will enter college in the fall of 2012.

Becoming a Finalist

To be considered in the rigorous competition for National Merit Scholarships, Semifinalists must advance to the Finalist level of the competition by meeting additional standards and fulfilling several requirements. These include having a record of very high academic performance in college preparatory course work, submitting SAT scores that confirm the PSAT performance, and being fully endorsed and recommended by a high school official. As a part of completing the detailed scholarship application, each Semifinalist writes an essay and gives information about extracurricular activities, leadership positions, and honors or awards received. A school official must provide a written recommendation and characterization of the Semifinalist, the student's academic record, and information about the school's curricula and grading system. The total file of information collected about each Semifinalist is used in the selection process.

Some 15,000 of the Semifinalists are expected to become Finalists in the 2012 competition. All Merit Scholarship recipients will be chosen from this group of exceptional students based on the strength of their accomplishments and abilities, without regard to gender, race, ethnic origin or religious preference.

About 8,300 National Merit Scholarships will be offered in 2012. Three types of awards, worth a total of more than \$34 million, will be underwritten by approximately 440 independent sponsor organizations, as well as by NMSC with its own funds. NMSC will send scholarship offers to recipients and notification to their principals next spring. The names of the scholarship recipients will be released to news media in four nationwide announcements-one for each type of scholarship-on three dates in April and May plus a second release of college-sponsored award winners in July.

*From the Upper School Counselor,
Mrs. Jacqueline Gaines...*

Why should students take the PSAT?

The PSAT is the best preparation for the SAT. Students who take the test in 11th grade and meet other program entry requirements may enter National Merit Scholarship Corporation programs. All students who take the test will receive an official score report on critical reading, mathematics and writing skills. Also, they will see how their scores compare to those of other students across the country and be able to see which answers they got right or wrong. Students will receive information about how they performed on specific academic skills and will receive free access to My College Quickstart, an online college and career planning tool that contains an outline PSAT Score Report; a customized My SAT Study Plan; a personality test; and personalized lists of colleges, majors and careers.

Who should take the PSAT?

Typically, students take the PSAT in grade 11 of high school. It is, however, beneficial for younger students to take the test to get a head start on improving academic skills needed for success in college and beyond.

What should be done to prepare for this test?

Classroom learning is the basis for test questions, so the best way students can prepare for the PSAT is by taking rigorous courses and becoming familiar with the test format. Students should review the PSAT Official Student Guide, which is full of useful information, including a full-length practice test. The Guide and the practice test will help students understand all test directions and will help them become familiar with the different types of questions that will be asked.

If students don't do well on this test, will it hurt their chances of getting into college?

Absolutely not. If anything, the PSAT will improve the students' chances because it provides personalized information on the types of skills that the student needs to improve on in preparation for the SAT and college.

Tips for Preparing

Students can find additional sample questions and test-taking tips, as well as complete explanations to practice test questions, at www.collegeboard.org/psat. Advice is given on understanding the difference between random and educated guessing. Because it takes time to develop reasoning skills, students should read widely, write frequently and take challenging academic courses. Test-taking emphasizes long-term preparation.

PSAT
October 12,
2011

*Get plenty of
rest and eat a
healthy
breakfast!*

PLAN
October 5,
2011

At Donoho, we administer the **PSAT to grades 9, 10, 11 on October 12, 2011**, and the **PLAN to all 10th graders on October 5, 2011**. PSAT is the preliminary test for SAT and PLAN is the preliminary test for ACT.

✧ For PreK-4 through 6th Grade ✧

*It's Going to Be a **Grand Day** at The Donoho School
Friday, September 30, 2011*

Grandparents and Grand friends will have the opportunity to visit PreK-4 through 6th grade classrooms and see many of the interesting things their grandchildren are learning. The complete schedule for that day follows:

- 12:30** **Shuttles begin from Golden Springs Baptist Church**
- 12:30-1:15** **Registration in the lower school gymnasium**
- 1:15** **Classroom visits**
- 2:30** **Shuttles begin returning to Golden Springs Baptist Church**

*Because our parking is so limited at the lower school, we ask that grandparents park at Golden Springs Baptist Church and ride a shuttle to the school.

Please contact Pat Brown by phone or email – 256-236-4459/
pbrown@donohoschool.com – to arrange accommodations for those with special needs.

We are very excited by the prospect of celebrating that special bond between our children and their grandparents/grand friends.

***Donoho Hosts First Calhoun County Championships
for 2011-2012***



Jr. High volleyball – Saturday, September 24, 2011

Varsity Volleyball – Saturday, October 1, 2011

For a complete listings of all championships, please visit the following link on the school website:

<http://www.donohoschool.com/pages/?pageID=75>



Members of the President's Advisory Council exchanging ideas with Mrs. Hurd in the September meeting.



Beverly Owell and Sue Canter sharing the latest apps in a Tuesdays with Technology session after school.

