

Two New Mexico students named 2023 U.S. Presidential Scholars

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U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona announced May 10 the 59th class of U.S. Presidential Scholars, recognizing 161 high school seniors for their accomplishments in academics, the arts, and career and technical education fields.

The New Mexico scholars are:

Brian L. Han, Los Alamos High School, Los Alamos

Emma Elizabeth Clayton, The ASK Academy, Rio Rancho

“U.S. Presidential Scholars have always represented the future of our country and the bright promise it holds. I want each of these remarkable students to know: your passion and intellect, pursuit of excellence, and spirit of service are exactly what our country needs,” Cardona said.

Cardona applauded the students.

“On behalf of President Biden, I am delighted to join your family, friends, and communities in celebrating your accomplishments,” he said. “Aim high, share your talents, and continue embracing opportunities to lead as your exciting future unfolds.”

New Mexico Public Education Department Cabinet Secretary Dr. Arsesnio Romero was delighted to hear the news.

“Thank you for all the hard work and dedication to learning and excellence that you have exhibited throughout your education in order to receive this prestigious national honor,” Romero said. “You make New Mexico proud!”

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The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars selects scholars annually based on their academic success, artistic and technical excellence, essays, school evaluations and transcripts, as well as a demonstrated commitment to community service and leadership.

Of the 3.7 million students expected to graduate from high school this year, more than 5,000 candidates qualified for the 2023 awards determined by outstanding performance on the College Board SAT or ACT exams or through nominations made by chief state school officers.

As directed by Presidential Executive Order, the 2023 U.S. Presidential Scholars are comprised of one young man and one young woman from each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at-large, 20 scholars in the arts and 20 scholars in career and technical education.

Created in 1964, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program has honored over 8,000 of the nation's top-performing students. The program was expanded in 1979 to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, literary and performing arts. In 2015, the program was again extended to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields.

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