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Hawai'i Public Charter School Senior Scholar Named a National Merit Semifinalist

Waipahu, Oahu -- Hawaii Technology Academy, the state's largest tuition-free public charter school, celebrates graduating senior Ronnie Cunitz's designation as a National Merit Semifinalist. This prestigious award is highly competitive. More than 1.5 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2020 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking qualifying tests. The nationwide pool of Semifinalists represents less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors and includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state.

"I am very grateful to be a National Merit Semifinalist, chiefly due to the fact that it strengthens my college applications and will save my parents and me a lot of money in the long run," says Cunitz. "I worked hard for this, and I will reap the benefits in the future."

Hawaii Technology Academy's blended learning environment played a critical role in nurturing Cunitz's drive and passion for academics and extracurricular opportunities.

"I have always wanted to do my best at the things I try, and my academics were no exception," says Cunitz. "HTA has a format that removes many distractions that would otherwise be there, which has allowed me to really focus on improving myself and learning in my classes. Both the online classes and the in-person teachers allow students to learn at their own pace, which has been very important to me."

Every Finalist will compete for one of 2,500 National Merit® \$2500 Scholarships that will be awarded on a state-representational basis. About 1,000 corporate-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards will be provided, in addition, about 180 colleges and universities are expected to finance some 4,100 college-sponsored Merit Scholarship awards.

"My husband and I consider Ronnie's recognition as a National Merit Semifinalist to be validation that our educational choices were the right ones, and that it doesn't take paying for private school tuition to ensure a quality education," says Cunitz's mom and learning coach, Wendy Marx-Cunitz.

To learn more about Hawaii Technology Academy, visit www.myhta.org.

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