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## PRESS RELEASE

For more information contact:

Dr. Wesley L. Scott, SBACS  
drwscott@sbacs.org  
(954) 367-7955

### **59 Southern Baptist High School Seniors Recognized for Scholarship and Musical Achievements in National Contests Over \$10,000 in Scholarships Awarded to Students and their Schools**

Fifty-nine high school seniors from the Class of 2017, enrolled in twenty-three *Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools* (SBACS) member schools, were selected to compete in a national awards program for their outstanding scholarship and/or musical achievements (see attached lists). Out of the fifty-nine finalists, nineteen shared the spotlight as national, regional or state award winners, dividing \$9,250 in college grants: \$1,000 to each of the national winners, \$500 to each of the regional winners, and \$250 to each of the state winners. National and regional scholar winners' schools also received cash awards for each nominee ultimately selected as a winner.

Each fall, SBACS member schools nominate candidates in two groups; scholars and musicians. Nominees must then complete an application process to compete for the scholarships. Applicants who meet the eligibility requirements become finalists. In the spring, a panel of adjudicators chooses the winners in each of the two categories.

[Joshua Expeditions Outstanding SBACS Scholars Awards Program](#) awards two national winners \$1,000 each, seven regional winners \$500 each, and five state winners \$250 each. Fourteen Christian school students were selected as 2017 scholarship winners from a field of fifty-four scholar finalists from seven states. To compete for the award, seniors must:

- score at least a 1300 on SAT (combined critical reading and math score) or 28 on ACT.
- have at least a 3.5 non-weighted cumulative GPA.
- have the testimony of their faculty to their good character, service and leadership within their schools, churches and communities.

[Joshua Expeditions Outstanding SBACS Musicians Awards Program](#) awards one national winner \$1,000, two regional winners \$500 each, and two state winners \$250 each. Five Christian school seniors were selected as 2017 musician winners from a field of five finalists from three states. To compete for the award, seniors must:

- have at least a 3.0 non-weighted cumulative GPA.
- be highly involved in music and show a superior level of vocal or instrumental skill.
- demonstrate an active faith in Christ.
- audition by CD.
- receive recommendations from music directors and teachers indicating good character, service and leadership within their schools, churches and communities.

The purpose of the *Joshua Expeditions Outstanding SBACS Scholars & Musicians Awards Program* is to discover and recognize students in our Southern Baptist Christian schools across the nation with exemplary expertise and accomplishments in scholastics or music, Christian character and service to others. The extraordinary level of achievement, character and leadership evidenced by this year's participants demonstrates that our schools are producing outstanding results, young men and women of excellence who will be the salt and light that the Lord Jesus Christ expects and requires to lead his Kingdom. SBACS maintains a database of over 700 Christian schools affiliated with Southern Baptist churches, associations or conventions around the nation, over 200 of which have high schools.

The Outstanding SBACS Scholars and Musicians Awards Program is funded by a generous grant from Joshua Expeditions, a non-profit Christian student travel company that offers global educational and mission trips for high school students from across the nation. Through their generous commitment, Joshua Expeditions has provided scholarship funding for SBACS member school students throughout the United States to receive help with the cost of higher education.

To request photos of winners and finalists, e-mail [mary@sbacs.org](mailto:mary@sbacs.org)

## **2017 Award Winners**

*(in rank order)*

### **National Scholar Winners (\$1,000)**

Clayton Shafer - North Raleigh Christian Academy, Raleigh, NC  
Megan Barineau - Bay Area Christian School, League City, TX

### **Regional Scholar Winners (\$500)**

Benjamin Gray - North Raleigh Christian Academy, Raleigh, NC  
Austin Perryman - High Point Christian Academy, High Point, NC  
Jessica Meena - The First Academy, Orlando, FL  
Kaiyi Jiang - The Kings Academy, Seymour, TN  
Tanner White - Grace Christian Academy, Knoxville, TN  
Yingyue Zhan - Whitefield Academy, Louisville, KY  
Lukas Miranda - Indian Rocks Christian School, Largo, FL

### **State Scholar Winners (\$250)**

Lauren Connell - The First Academy, Orlando, FL  
Samantha Cochran - Southwest Florida Christian Academy, Ft. Myers, FL  
Cooper Case - Whitesburg Academy, Huntsville, AL  
Kelsey Holland - Grace Christian Academy, Knoxville, TN  
Brooke Jordan - North Raleigh Christian Academy, Raleigh, NC

### **National Musician Winner (\$1,000)**

Joshua DiLena - Foundation Academy, Winter Garden, FL

### **Regional Musician Winners (\$500)**

Brennen Wilde - Mt. Juliet Christian Academy, Mt. Juliet, TN  
Kwon Choi - Parkview Baptist School, Baton Rouge, LA

### **State Musician Winners (\$250)**

Shelby Rodgers - Grace Christian Academy, Knoxville, TN  
Ariel Schesniak - Rocky Bayou Christian Academy, Niceville, FL