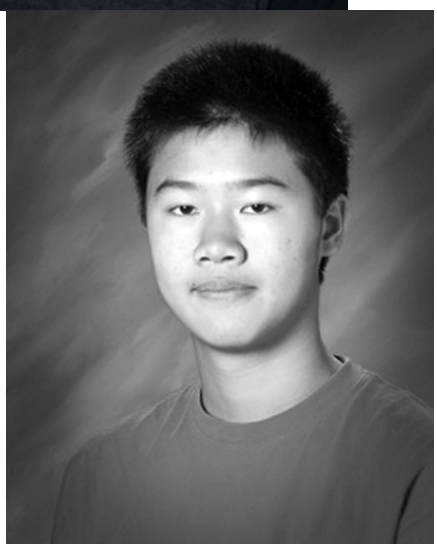
Two Monroe High seniors were summoned to the school principal's office recently. Sounding ominous they quickly responded to learn it was good news. They were named semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship competition.

Matt Engel



Howard Chen

"I was fairly surprised," says Matt Engel. "I thought I was in some big trouble."

"We didn't know the cut-off date," says Howard Chen. "Nobody knows what distinguishes us from each other." Chen and Engel and two other MHS students received preliminary recognition in the National Merit Scholarship Program last spring.

For both the young men, earning a National Merit Scholarship would be a boost toward achieving their goals. Chen plans to be a physician and is making applications to four-year colleges, such as the Honors College at Arizona State University, and the medical program at Rice University.

Engel dreams of becoming an astronaut and plans to get a degree in physics, mechanical engineering or perhaps geology. He is looking at Cal Tech, University of Washington, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Both students will be very busy in the months ahead before they hear about scholarship results. Engel has just completed his FAA exam and will take his FAA flight test to receive his pilot's license for single engine land planes. He is carrying a full load at school and is active in four clubs as well as cross country.

Chen plays varsity tennis in addition to taking five AP classes, including an independent study in calculus.

Lauren Anderson, a freshman of Biola University and resident of Bothell received the President's scholarship for the 2011/2012 academic year.

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