



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris Announces Two Western Queens Students Nominated To Be Presidential Scholars By State Education Department

MICHAEL GIANARIS December 16, 2022

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ASTORIA, N.Y. – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris announced that two western Queens students have been nominated to be Presidential Scholars by the New York State Education Department. They were among 20 students included from across the State of New York and whose names are now given to the U.S. Secretary of Education for consideration. The recognized students are Jordan Sewell and Niamh Smyth, both of the Academy for American Studies.

“These nominees are impressive young people whose commitment to academic excellence, extracurricular activities, and involvement in their communities shine bright across our state,” said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. “I am thrilled Jordan Sewell and Niamh Smyth were nominated as Presidential Scholars and congratulate them and the Academy of American Studies on this impressive honor.”

In partnership with Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris, **District 30 Superintendent Dr. Philip A. Composto** said, “I extend my sincere congratulations to Jordan Sewell and Niamh Smyth, for their nomination by the NYS Education department for the very prestigious U.S. Presidential Scholars Award, only awarded to a maximum of 161 students each year. Both students are seniors at the Academy of American Studies in District 30 and are being nominated based on their demonstrated excellence in academics. I am very proud of Jordan and Niamh’s accomplishments and nomination and thank them for representing the promise of greatness in our young people today.”

“It's a pleasure to see such wonderful young adults, Niamh and Jordan, nominated for this prestigious honor,” said **William Bassel, Principal of the Academy of American Studies**. “They both perfectly exemplify the Academy ethos of honor, service, and scholarship!”

About the Presidential Scholars Program

The [United States Presidential Scholars Program](#) was established in 1964, by [Executive Order of the President](#), to recognize and honor some of our Nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. In 1979, the Program was extended to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, creative and performing arts. In 2015, the program was again extended to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields. Each year, up to 161 students are named U.S. Presidential Scholars, one of the Nation's highest honors for high school students. The Scholars represent excellence in education and the promise of greatness in young people. In honoring the U.S. Presidential Scholars, the President of the United States symbolically honors all graduating high school seniors of high potential.

Students have the opportunity to become Presidential Scholars based on [three paths of accomplishment](#). The majority of the Scholars are selected on the basis of broad academic achievement. Approximately twenty additional students are selected on the basis of their academic and artistic scholarship in the visual arts, the performing arts, or creative writing. Another twenty students are selected on the basis of their outstanding scholarship and accomplishment in career and technical education fields.