



For Immediate Release

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## **STJ Is Home to Kathleen Cunningham, National Merit Semifinalist**

Saint James School senior Kathleen Cunningham has been named a National Merit Scholarship Program Semifinalist, a prestigious honor awarded to only 16,000 students nationwide, from 1,500,000 program entrants. She is the third National Merit honoree from the school in as many years.

The daughter of Drs. Daniel and Debra Cunningham, Kathleen began attending Saint James in pre-school. The 17-year-old says she hopes to become an engineer.

"I know I want to apply to Colorado State University, because I like the atmosphere there and my grandparents live in Ft. Collins," she said.

Cunningham, who hopes the honor will translate into scholarship dollars, is also giving strong consideration to Auburn University and Georgia Tech.

In addition to being an honor student, Cunningham is also a member of the school's Robotics and Science Olympiad Teams.

As a semifinalist, Cunningham has an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 8,000 National Merit Scholarships worth about \$35 million that will be offered next spring. To be considered for a Merit Scholarship® award, semifinalists must fulfill several requirements to advance to the finalist level of the competition. About 90 percent of the semifinalists are expected to attain finalist standing, and more than half of the finalists will win a National Merit Scholarship, earning the Merit Scholar® title.

Asked to name her favorite class, Cunningham quickly replies, "Calculus. I love the teacher and the information just makes sense," she adds, smiling.

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, was established in 1955. Scholarships are underwritten by NMSC with its own funds and by approximately 440 business organizations and higher education institutions that share NMSC's goals of honoring the nation's scholastic champions and encouraging the pursuit of academic excellence.

**Caption: STJ's Kathleen Cunningham was named a semifinalist in the National Merit Scholarship Competition. The daughter of Daniel and Debra Cunningham, she is an honor student at the school.**

