

Press Release



Battle Ground Public Schools

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Nov. 1, 2011

BGHS has National Merit semifinalist



Ryan Russell

Ryan Russell, a Battle Ground High School senior who writes computer programs, plays the saxophone in the school's advanced jazz band, is an elected student body officer and runs cross country and track, is one smart kid.

Ryan has been named a semifinalist in the 2012 National Merit Scholarship competition as a result of scoring 231 out of a possible 240 in the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test last fall. He is one of about 15,000 semifinalists from 1.5 million students who took the test. In late winter or early spring 8,400 of the semifinalists will be awarded scholarships.

His proud-as-punch school counselor, Dawn Pack, said "I have been lucky to work with Ryan his entire high school career. His whole family is wonderful."

Ryan, who intends to study computer science, is making early application to Stanford University. Also high on his list of college preferences are Harvard, Carnegie Mellon University, Cal Tech and Cornell University.

He and his three younger sisters, two at BGHS and one at Chief Umtuch Middle

School, are the children of Dan and Joy Russell, senior pastors at Battle Ground Foursquare Church. Ryan grew up in Colorado Springs and Gresham, Ore., before his family moved to Battle Ground when he was a freshman.

Asked to cite one teacher or event that was especially influential in his academic development, Ryan credited his fifth grade teacher in Gresham, which was his first year in public schools after home schooling and private schools.

He said one memorable and valuable project that year involved a make-believe cross-country car trip with three other students. The project was fun and taught him a lot about U.S. geography, writing, research, teamwork and “learning to plan ahead.”

However, he confessed without prodding, “I didn’t learn not to procrastinate until the eighth grade.”



Ryan Russell, far left, with BGHS advanced jazz band

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