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Congressman nominates students for military academies

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A single tear settled in the corner of Susan Soto's left eye as she listened to her daughter, Nicole, discuss receiving a Congressional nomination to attend one of the country's military academies.

"I'm very proud of her," Susan Soto said, standing next to her daughter and her husband, Edwin.

Nicole Soto, a Jonesboro High School senior, is one of 17 young Americans in whom U.S. Rep. David Scott, D-Jonesboro, nominated to four of the nation's military academies. The nominees, 11 of whom reside in Henry and Clayton counties, were honored during a reception held in his Jonesboro District 13 office.

The 17 residents received nominations to attend either the U.S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Colo., the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point,



Photo by Bill Yoder
Nominees for U.S. Military Academies met with Rep. David Scott on Saturday in his congressional office in Jonesboro. Pictured with Scott are, from left, Vincent Wiggins, Phillip Severson and Katie Pulliam, all hoping for appointments to the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y.

N.Y., the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., or the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis.

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Md. Eleven of the nominees reside in Henry and Clayton counties.

"Ever since 10th-grade year in the Junior ROTC, I always wanted to go to a military academy," said Nicole Soto, who is a junior squadron commander – the highest ranking officer – in Jonesboro High's Junior ROTC program. Nicole Soto, who is ranked third in her senior class, will attend the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, N.Y. this fall.

Although the nomination is not a guaranteed in into the academy – students have to apply separately – it is a critical point of the acceptance process, Scott explained.

"Without a nomination, you can't get in," Scott said. This year marks Scott's third time holding nominations. He previously nominated 10 people – eight to military academies and two to military preparatory schools.

Paid tuition for four years of school and top-notch training, along with other benefits, are among the many gains the nominees will receive if they are accepted into the military academies.

"It is a very, very highly valued education," Scott said, explaining if there was a dollar amount put on the whole package, economists, educators and military officials had valued it around \$300,000.

The 17 nominees honored Saturday were among about 50 who initially inquired about receiving the Congressional nomination. The 13th District 2005 Military Academy Selection Board, which is comprised of seven ranking military officers, is the advisory group that helps winnow down the nominee selection.

"It's an ongoing process. In this process, I've already began the process of the next school year," said David Johnson, Scott's senior staff assistant and military and veterans liaison.

Riverdale resident Theresa



Photo by Bill Yoder

U.S. Rep. David Scott, D-Jonesboro, with his nominees for the U.S. Military Academies.

Bowen's 19-year-old son, Rudolph, will graduate from the Air Force Preparatory School in Colorado next month after receiving a nomination from Scott last year to attend.

"And he's doing quite well there. He's on the prep school basketball

team, and he's a flight commander," Bowen said.

Scott also nominated Rudolph Bowen to attend the United States Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Colo., in the fall.

"It is truly a blessing for me to have this opportunity to make

these appointments for these outstanding, well-qualified and dedicated young people," Scott said. "They are excellent role models for our youth."

Scott said every Congressman and senator has the opportunity to make such nominations.

UPCOMING 2005 EVENTS

Spring

Geranium Festival
Karaoke on the Square
Music on the Square

Summer

McDonough Moments on the Square
Movie on the Square
Watermelon Eating & Seed Spitting Contest on the Square
Roberto Clemente World Series Amateur Baseball
Music on the Square
Karaoke on the Square

McDonough Hospitality & Tourism Bureau & Welcome Center
5 Griffin Street • McDonough, GA 30253
770-898-9311 • www.tourismcdonough.com

Fall

Fall Festival & Chili Cook-Off
Trick or Treat on the Square

Winter

Holiday Open House on the Square
Holiday Gala
Holiday Parade & Lighting of the Christmas Tree
McDonough Holiday Tour of Homes



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