

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA



# UCF SCHOLAR

## 2023

THE NEWSLETTER FOR NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALISTS

# CONGRATULATIONS...

**O**n being named a National Merit Scholarship semifinalist. At the University of Central Florida, we recognize and reward your achievement. It's one reason why UCF is ranked among the Top 25 universities in the nation for National Merit Scholar enrollment.

Orlando's innovation economy is flourishing, and our industry partnerships create opportunities for internships, cooperative learning and research. And at UCF, research isn't just for graduate students. Undergraduates benefit from connections to faculty and peer mentors, and enjoy opportunities to pursue original and innovative research at the Burnett Honors College.

The best way to experience our modern campus is to visit — virtually or in person. We can help you organize a personalized experience and introduce you to the many benefits of our Scholars Program. By visiting, you'll have the opportunity to:

## IN-PERSON

- **Speak with faculty in the Burnett Honors College and your academic areas of interest**
- **Meet current UCF National Merit Scholars**
- **Take a private, personalized golf cart tour of campus**
- **Explore exclusive housing for honors students in the Towers at Knights Plaza**
- **Enjoy lunch in one of our on-campus dining halls**
- **Review the National Merit Scholarship process and UCF program details**

## VIRTUALLY:

- **Speak with faculty from the Burnett Honors College**
- **Meet with faculty from your academic area of interest**
- **Meet current UCF National Merit Scholars**
- **Review the National Merit Scholarship process and UCF program details**

Please contact us for availability and to schedule your visit. We look forward to introducing you to campus and showing you what UCF has to offer.

**Lyndsey Holland**  
**The Scholars Program**

Office of Undergraduate Admissions

407.823.6179 | [scholarsprogram@ucf.edu](mailto:scholarsprogram@ucf.edu)



## BURNETT HONORS COLLEGE

**T**he Burnett Honors College combines the intimacy of a small liberal arts college with the benefits and academic resources of a metropolitan research university. In classes limited to 20 or fewer students, you'll study, conduct research and connect with a close-knit community of UCF student scholars and expert faculty. The college offers a scholarly environment where you'll have access to upper-division honors classes, interdisciplinary seminars, service-learning opportunities and additional one-on-one time with faculty and advisors.

The college's state-of-the-art facility houses a computer lab, reading room, multimedia classrooms and a meditation garden. Honors students also get priority registration, scholarship opportunities, invitations to special events and dedicated on-campus housing.

To learn more about the college, call **407.823.2545** or visit [honors.ucf.edu](http://honors.ucf.edu).

## LEAD SCHOLARS ACADEMY

**T**he LEAD Scholars Academy is a leadership development experience for select students to learn in and out of the classroom. In this two-year program, participants pursue the academic study of leadership, study how to use it in their careers and develop ways to use their skills to give back to peers and the community.

To join a group of active and motivated people who cover all the necessary elements for leadership growth — people who try as hard and care as much as you do — apply to the LEAD Scholars Academy. Call **407.823.2223** or visit [lead.sdes.ucf.edu](http://lead.sdes.ucf.edu) to learn more.



# NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

While you have many colleges to choose from, more students each year are putting UCF at the top of their list. One reason is the strong support UCF offers its most talented students. Outlined below are the opportunities available to National Merit qualifiers:

## SEMIFINALISTS

- Expedited admission decision
- Priority consideration for merit scholarships

## FINALISTS

If you are named a finalist and designate UCF as your first choice by the deadline, you will receive scholarships valued at:

### Florida Residents — UCF Cost of Attendance

The following awards will be stacked to total your cost of attendance and include:

- Benacquisto Scholarship
- Corporate-Sponsored Award or UCF College-Sponsored Award
- Florida Bright Futures
- National Merit Scholarship Corporation Award

### Non-Florida Residents

The following awards will be stacked and include:

- UCF Merit Scholarship valued at \$80,000\*
- Waiver of non-resident fee for tuition

### All finalists who are first choice designees also receive:

- Expedited admission decision to UCF
- Guaranteed admission to the LEAD Scholars Academy (upon application)
- Guaranteed admission to the Burnett Honors College (upon application) with benefits that include:
  - Priority registration
  - Special orientation program
  - Access to faculty mentoring
  - Exclusive research and internship opportunities
  - Access to honors housing in the Towers at Knights Plaza
- Guaranteed on-campus housing for four years with available housing preference (upon application)
- Laptop computer

\*Limited to 40 students

## ALUM

## OPPORTUNITY AWAITS YOU

**Brandt Dietry '19** chose to attend UCF because of the significant academic and real-world opportunities he would have access to here — a choice that would prove to be quite rewarding. While earning his degree in economics with a minor in legal studies at UCF, the National Merit Scholar was handpicked by a professor to intern at a law firm. Today, Brandt is working in Chicago with the Cook County State Attorney's Office, and is attending Harvard Law.

*"I always knew I wanted to go to a big school for the types of opportunities they can provide, and I think if you rise to the top in a big school that's more valuable than rising to the top in a smaller school."*

# UNLEASHING POTENTIAL

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At UCF, our mission is to unleash the potential of people and ideas to positively change the world.

Founded in 1963 with the mission to provide talent for Central Florida and the growing U.S. space program, UCF has been making an impact on the state, our nation — and outer space — ever since.

Just like you, we're always looking to the future, reaching for the stars and pursuing bold ambitions.

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- UCF ranks among the nation's top 20 most innovative colleges, according to *U.S. News & World Report*.
- UCF ranks among the top 30 universities in the nation for new National Merit Scholars enrolled.
- We've earned the Carnegie Foundation's highest classification for research activity.
- Our graduates earn Fulbright, Goldwater, Mellon, Rhodes, Truman and Udall scholarships.
- Kiplinger and *Forbes* rank a UCF education among the nation's best values.
- With 29% hispanic enrollment, UCF is designated a Hispanic Serving Institution by the U.S. Department of Education.
- For the sixth consecutive year UCF's Rosen College of Hospitality Management is ranked among the top five best hospitality and hotel management schools in the world, by *CEOWorld* magazine.
- UCF awards more than 18,000 degrees a year and is one of the top producers of graduates among public universities.



# ACADEMICS THAT MATCH YOUR AMBITION

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UCF offers more than options — we provide boundless opportunity.

Here, you'll interact with caring faculty, immerse yourself in new challenges, explore groundbreaking research opportunities, and enjoy our student-centered approach to higher education. Our expert advisors and coaches will help you choose your path and stay on track.

Explore our 13 colleges and more than 230 degree programs.

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## OUR DEGREE PROGRAMS

- 104 bachelor's degree programs
- 97 master's degree programs
- 31 doctoral degree programs
- 3 professional doctoral degree programs
- 3 research specialist degree programs

## OUR 13 COLLEGES

- Arts and Humanities
- Burnett Honors College
- Business
- Community Innovation and Education
- Engineering and Computer Science
- Graduate Studies
- Health Professions and Sciences
- Medicine
- Nursing
- Optics and Photonics
- Rosen College of Hospitality Management
- Sciences
- Undergraduate Studies

Explore our degree programs:  
[ucf.edu/degree-search](https://ucf.edu/degree-search)





## RESEARCH WITH AN IMPACT

Every day at UCF, you can find students and researchers working together to generate real-world impact, improving the lives of our local and global community. Research opportunities are wide-ranging and on-going in the areas of energy, tourism, HIV, cancer, mental health, human behavior, civics education, language acquisition, cybersecurity, sea-level rise, building energy conservation, species conservation and the impact of art on health.

## IMAGINATION IN ACTION

Turn your big ideas into reality with UCF makerspaces. Students across all disciplines can gather, conceptualize, test and create in collaborative labs featuring state-of-the-art technology. This ecosystem of opportunity includes the Texas Instruments Innovation Lab, which is equipped with 3D printers, laser cutters and other high-tech equipment, and a manufacturing lab to finalize prototype designs. The Lockheed Martin Cyber Innovation Lab — which serves as a learning hub, classroom and the practice center for the university's cyberdefense club, Hack@UCF — helps hone future leaders in STEM and cybersecurity. And the Games and Interactive Media Makerspace at UCF Downtown (pictured right) provides students with the resources to experiment and create games, websites and interdisciplinary projects.



# COMMUNITY & CELEBRATIONS

With hundreds of events and activities outside the classroom, there are seemingly endless ways to make friends, make memories and make the most of your college experience. From Spirit Splash to UCF Celebrates the Arts, these time-honored and fan-favorite traditions are just a few of our top picks.

- 1 The **KNIGHTING** is UCF's official welcome ceremony for new students, and it kicks off a week of exciting events called Pegasus Palooza. Make new friends, explore campus, laugh at comedians and so much more.
- 2 Grab a blanket and pack a picnic to enjoy **SYMPHONY UNDER THE STARS**. The annual community event features the UCF Symphony Orchestra performing an outdoor concert on Memory Mall.
- 3 **SPIRIT SPLASH** is one of the most popular events — and has been voted one of the best college traditions in the nation. During Homecoming Week, Knights charge into the Reflecting Pond and catch collectible rubber ducks and commemorative T-shirts.
- 4 You won't want to miss **UCF CELEBRATES THE ARTS**, a 10-day festival featuring musicals, living art and concert performances that showcase creativity, innovation and collaboration across the university.
- 5 Make sure you've got comfy shoes for this one, because **KNIGHT-THON** concludes with a 20-hour dance marathon. The heartwarming, philanthropic event consistently raises more than \$1 million each year for a local children's hospital.
- 6 If you like roller coasters, you'll love **UNIVERSAL KNIGHTS**. Each spring, thousands of UCF students enjoy exclusive, late-night access to Universal's Islands of Adventure.
- 7 **Student Research Week** is a showcase of discovery and scholarship where students participate in workshops and events, including poster sessions where they present research and creative scholarship to the UCF community.



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ALUM

## FINDING LIKE MINDS

**Annalicia Burns '14** knew UCF was the right place to start her future because of the university's energetic atmosphere and diverse opportunities. With the encouragement of faculty, the biomedical sciences major balanced her intense pre-med coursework with personal interests as she double-majored in anthropology. Between studying abroad in the Caribbean, conducting research on campus and involvement with the Burnett Honors College, Burns found a rewarding academic journey at UCF that went beyond the classroom and helped prepare her to complete her residency at Duke's pediatric program.

*"Whatever interest you may have, however obscure it may be, I feel like you can always find people at UCF who share that interest."*





# FREQUENTLY

## ASKED QUESTIONS

### How can I be considered for a National Merit Scholarship at UCF?

First you must qualify as a National Merit Scholar Semifinalist. You should then apply for admission to UCF. National Merit Semifinalists are eligible for scholarship consideration. Students advancing to National Merit Finalist standing are eligible for sponsorship as a National Merit Scholar if they select UCF as their first-choice institution and adhere to the deadlines specified by NMSC. Finalists who designate UCF as their first choice with the NMSC by their deadline will be considered for a UCF merit scholarship. Please visit [nationalmerit.org](http://nationalmerit.org) for more information.

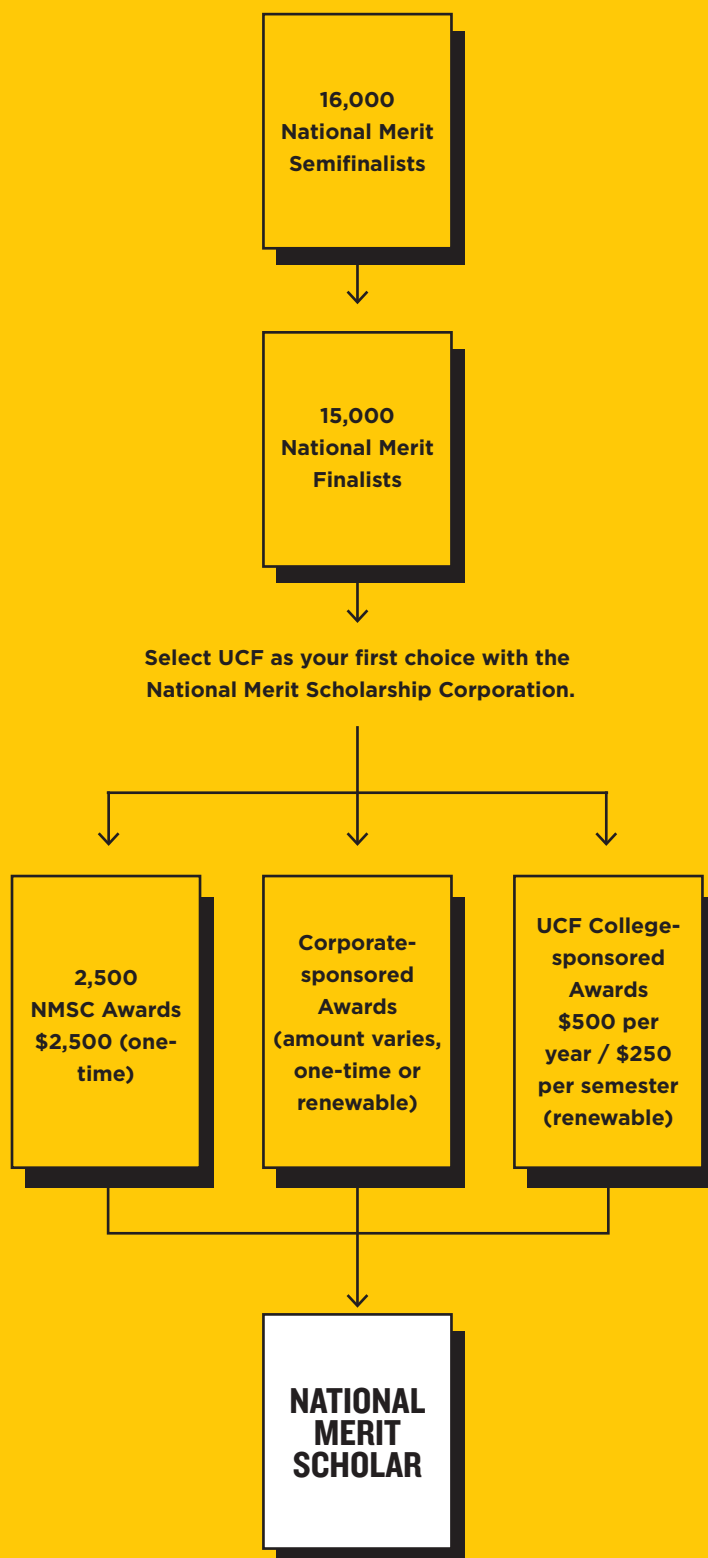
### How do I select UCF as my first choice with the NMSC?

Students are responsible for indicating their first-choice college or university with the NMSC. Be careful to complete all required documentation in accordance with NMSC guidelines and deadlines. If you have questions or concerns, contact NMSC officials at **847.866.5100** or visit [nationalmerit.org](http://nationalmerit.org).

### How can the National Merit Scholarship be used?

The scholarship may be used in addition to the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, Florida Prepaid College Plans, private scholarships and, in some cases, need-based assistance. It will be applied to tuition and fees first, but can also cover part, or all, of the cost of on-campus housing when combined with other awards.

# NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION





## ALUMS

# SERVING GREATER CAUSES

Orlando natives **Aliya Centner '21** and **Safia Centner '21** chose to attend UCF to stay close to their community, their family and each other, as well as take advantage of scholarship opportunities as National Merit Scholars and leadership experiences as LEAD Scholars. Their academic journeys as Knights continue as they pursue medical degrees at the UCF College of Medicine. Both hope to better the lives of others and have already started down that path by serving on the executive board for Relay for Life and helping found the UCF chapter of Be the Match.

*"We've learned more about our personalities and strengths and have applied our skills to meaningful organizations while at UCF."*

— Safia Centner



# CHECKLIST

# NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP

## SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER

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**National Merit Scholarship Corporation announces semifinalists**  
In September, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation announces the names of approximately 16,000 semifinalists.

**Submit your application early in the fall semester**  
Submit your application online at [apply.ucf.edu](https://apply.ucf.edu) early in the fall semester. Include a short essay, but **don't** include the \$30 application fee with your submission. Instead, contact [scholarsprogram@ucf.edu](mailto:scholarsprogram@ucf.edu) or **407.823.6179** to have the application fee waived. UCF also accepts the Common Application. However, the application fee cannot be waived if submitting using this method.

**Visit UCF**  
To see if UCF is right for you, come visit us. Contact us to get a personalized or virtual campus tour, where you'll have the chance to:

- Meet with faculty in the Burnett Honors College and your area(s) of interest
- Meet current UCF National Merit Scholars
- Take a golf cart tour of the campus
- Explore honors housing
- Enjoy lunch on campus

**Complete the NMSC application**  
To be considered for finalist standing, every semifinalist must complete the NMSC application. In addition, your high school must submit an official transcript and a letter of recommendation. The NMSC also requires SAT or ACT scores for consideration.

## JANUARY – FEBRUARY

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**Apply to the Burnett Honors College**  
To be eligible for the many benefits of the Burnett Honors College, you must submit a completed paper application. No portion of the college's application is waived. All sections must be completed in full (including the essay) and submitted as soon as possible.

**Apply to the LEAD Scholars Academy**  
If you wish to participate in the LEAD Scholars program, you must submit a completed application by May 31.

**Designate UCF as your first-choice institution**  
This is an ongoing process with the first available notification provided in early March and continuing in subsequent notification rounds. If you are "undecided" with the NMSC, the last opportunity to designate UCF as your first choice is May 31.

**NMSC announces finalists**  
The NMSC notifies finalists in February. More than 90 percent of semifinalists advance to finalist standing. All finalists who are Florida residents and designate UCF as their first choice by the NMSC deadline are guaranteed the UCF National Merit finalist scholarship; UCF National Merit finalist scholarships for Non-Florida residents are limited to 40 students.

## MARCH – JUNE

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**NMSC notifies finalists of awards**  
Beginning in March, the NMSC will offer finalists one of three awards:

- National Merit-sponsored
- Corporate-sponsored
- College-sponsored

These awards are in addition to your UCF merit scholarship, and this process is handled directly through the NMSC.

**Return the UCF merit scholarship acceptance form**  
Finalists who designate UCF as their first choice with the NMSC by the May deadline will officially be awarded their UCF merit scholarship in writing. Once the form is submitted, the award will be indicated on your myUCF account under "Financial Aid."

**Apply for UCF Housing**  
Determine whether to sign an academic or annual agreement housing contract. Then submit your contract through your myUCF account along with the \$250 prepayment.

**Complete the FAFSA**  
All National Merit Scholars receiving a UCF merit scholarship are encouraged to submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid to the UCF Office of Financial Assistance every year by May 1.

**Register for Orientation**  
Orientation registration is available in mid-spring. Go online through your myUCF account to select the orientation session you would like to attend (these also are posted on the orientation website). National Merit finalists are encouraged to attend the honors orientation; however, you may select any orientation to attend.

**Submit the UCF enrollment deposit**  
Submit the \$200 enrollment deposit, which is applied toward your first semester tuition and is not waived as part of your scholarship, by May 1.

**Select UCF as first-choice institution by May 31**  
If you have "undecided" listed as your first choice, you must designate UCF as your first choice with the NMSC by May 31, to be guaranteed the UCF merit scholarship award.



# FIND YOURSELF HERE





There's so much to see and do here. From application to graduation, you'll be inspired to do amazing things. So whether you prefer academics and research or campus activities and athletics, we'll provide you with the tools and support you need to find your place and foster your purpose.

Want a glimpse of what life is like as a Knight? Our episode of The College Tour shines a spotlight on the people, places and programs that make UCF a special place to learn and grow.



## THE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

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 [@UCFadmissions](https://twitter.com/UCFadmissions)  
 [youtube.com/ucfadmission](https://youtube.com/ucfadmission)

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Admissions  
Burnett Honors College  
Housing and Residence Life  
LEAD Scholars Academy  
Office of Student Involvement  
Orientation  
Student Financial Assistance  
Student Health Services

[admissions.ucf.edu](https://admissions.ucf.edu)  
[honors.ucf.edu](https://honors.ucf.edu)  
[housing.ucf.edu](https://housing.ucf.edu)  
[lead.sdes.ucf.edu](https://lead.sdes.ucf.edu)  
[osi.ucf.edu](https://osi.ucf.edu)  
[orientation.ucf.edu](https://orientation.ucf.edu)  
[finaid.ucf.edu](https://finaid.ucf.edu)  
[studenthealth.ucf.edu](https://studenthealth.ucf.edu)

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