**Lamar student aces ACT exam**

*May 4, 2016* – When Lamar High School junior Edward “Ned” Swart sat for the ACT college entrance exam earlier this year, he hoped to earn a score that would make his scholarship applications stand out. Mission accomplished.

Swart was recently notified that he earned the highest possible ACT composite score of 36. On average, less than 0.1 percent of students who take the ACT nationally earns the top score. The ACT is a college entrance exam that covers English, mathematics, reading, science and an optional writing test.

“I’m surprised but honored. All things that could go right did go right for me that day,” Swart said. “My parents are so excited. This means more scholarship money for me to go to school.”

Among ACT test takers in the high school graduating class of 2015, only 1,598 of more than 1.92 million students earned a score of 36. Exceptional scores of 36 provide colleges with evidence of student readiness for the academic rigors that lie ahead, according to the ACT.

Swart says he prepared for the test by taking an ACT practice test the night before the exam and by also taking the SAT exam. He is enrolled in International Baccalaureate classes at Lamar and is a member of the school marching band and the National Honor Society. Upon graduation, Swart plans to study mechanical engineering at Texas A&M University.

“Ned is an outstanding student, but more importantly, he’s just a great human being,” said Lamar Principal Dr. James McSwain. “He’s been in the Lamar Band throughout high school and has always been the student who is dependable, caring, willing to help others, and mature. When I look at young people like him, I have great hope for our future. Contrary to what some may claim, students coming out of our schools today are better educated and more socially responsible than any generation before them and I think they will do a much better job of running the world than my generation. Ned Swart is a great example.”

