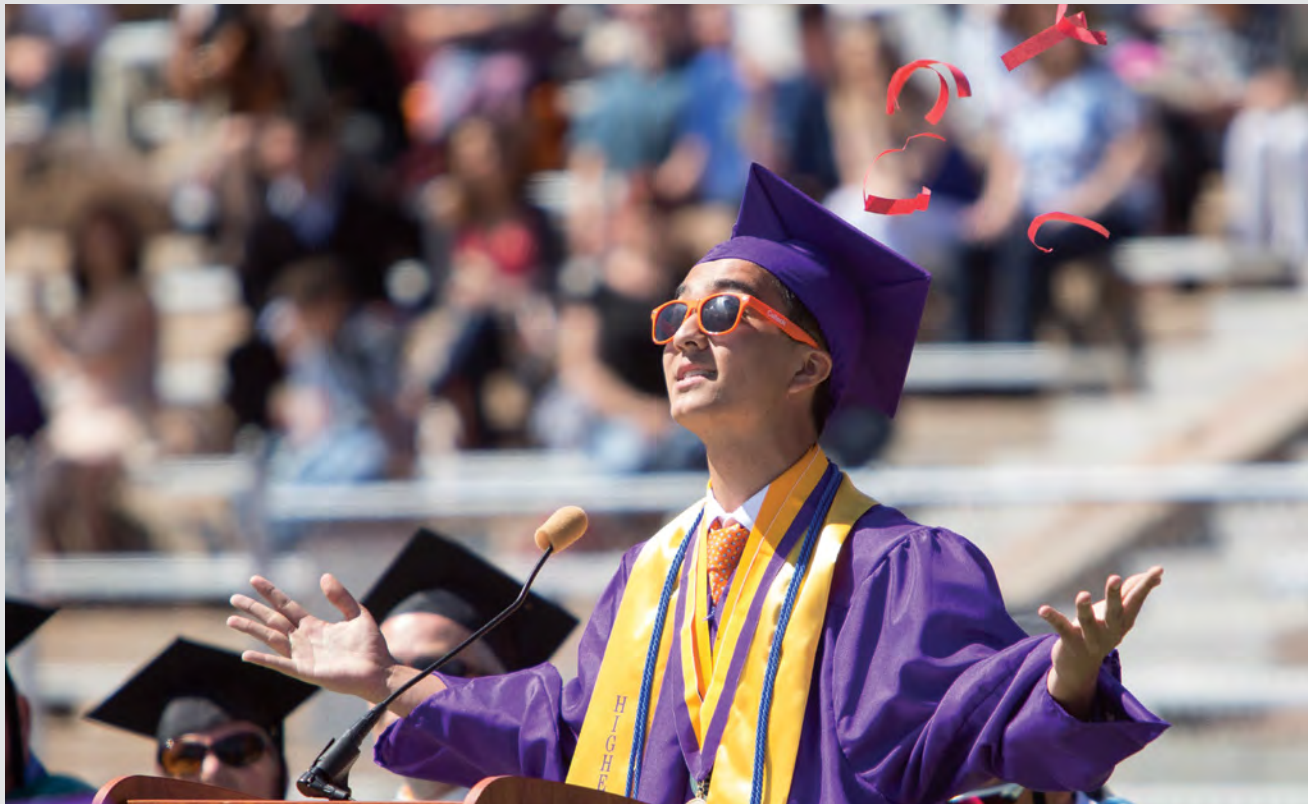


## Andrew Chan — 2017 National Merit \$2500 Scholarship



When asked why he chose to pursue a major in geochemistry, Andrew Chan replies, “because of my love of rocks and my love of science.” Andrew’s interest in geology stems from a childhood fascination with dinosaurs and their fossils, and in high school he gained “a new appreciation for science and the work that scientists perform” after completing an internship with the bioengineering department at the University of Colorado Denver. Andrew is currently writing a paper describing the clutch mechanism for a prosthetic motor he developed during his internship. He maintains that “the scientific process is one of failure and revision,” and plans to utilize this process throughout a career dedicated to finding environmentally friendly ways to harvest the earth’s minerals.

Andrew placed great value on his high school math and science classes, from IB design technology to pre-calculus. He acted as the strategy captain of his high school FIRST Robotics team and was the founder and captain of the school Science Bowl club. In his senior year, Andrew won an award for overall science achievement at his high school and was gratified to see his hard work recognized. “Receiving this science award,” Andrew says, “made me feel that I hadn’t wasted my efforts doing science, and they were valued not just by me, but by the department as a whole.” Similarly, the receipt of his National Merit award provided Andrew with validation for choosing to pursue a degree in geochemistry. “This award,” he says, “represents a realization that I belong in the education and career path I’ve chosen.”

Outside of the academic sphere, Andrew was extensively involved in volunteer work. He logged over 800 hours at the Denver Zoo, applying his knowledge about the evolution of dinosaurs to the bird exhibit through discussions with zoo visitors and performing basic animal husbandry tasks. Andrew was also a member of his high school’s fencing team and has fenced competitively for six years. Currently a freshman at California Institute of Technology, Andrew plans to continue fencing as a member of the Division I NCAA team. He aspires to uphold his personal mantra, which was shaped by the teaching methods of his favorite elementary school teacher, and promises “to never restrain my creativity, to always do every single thing that excites me, and to never lose sight of the fun in learning.”