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Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarship Recipients Announced For Spring

EAST LANSING, Mich. - Feb. 20 - The Michigan High School Athletic Association's Scholar-Athlete Award program has selected its seven scholarship recipients for the 2001 spring sports season.

Farm Bureau Insurance, in its 12th year of sponsoring the award, will give a \$1,000 college scholarship to each of the spring sport winners. Farm Bureau will present a total of 24 scholarships, one for each sport in which the MHSAA sponsors a postseason tournament.

Each of the scholarship recipients will be honored at halftime ceremonies of the Class C Boys Basketball final game at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing on March 24. Commemorative plaques will be given to other finalists in recognition of their accomplishments.

The seven Scholar-Athlete Award honorees for the 2001 spring sports season are: David M. Omenn, Ann Arbor Huron, baseball; Laura Beauchamp, Dexter, girls golf; Amy Myers, Cadillac, girls soccer; Amy Fleming, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central, softball; David Litwiller, Ithaca, boys tennis; Steven I. Lockwood, Alpena, boys track & field; Megan Elizabeth Dana, Saginaw Heritage, girls track & field.

Overviews of the seven scholarship recipients of the spring Scholar-Athlete Award follow. A quote from each recipient's essay is also included:

Baseball -- David M. Omenn, Ann Arbor Huron. Earned two varsity letters in baseball ... named team's "Most Versatile" as a junior ... served on Huron's Executive Board as an upperclassman and on the Huron Site Improvement Team as a senior ... member of National Honor Society ... sports editor of school paper, *The Emery* ... participated on the Science Olympiad Team for three years and won 10 medals in regional and state competitions ... also involved with Boy Scouts throughout high school and will earn Eagle Scout rank in the spring ... volunteered during local nursing home visitations and as a middle school tutor ... interested in studying medicine, law, or journalism in college.

Essay Quote - "If you look at the great teams across all sports, you can see that they all have great unity and a great respect for each other and for the game. This is the ultimate goal; you must play hard, play respectfully, and play as a team. This is what sports ought to be about. Those who play for their love and passion for the game with good sportsmanship make a sport a truly wonderful experience."

(more)

2-2-2 – Spring Scholar-Athlete Award Recipients

Girls Golf -- Laura Beauchamp, Dexter. Lettered four times in golf ... selected captain as a junior and senior, voted team MVP as a sophomore and junior, and named First Team All-Conference last spring ... member of National Honor Society and Key Club ... President of Common Ground Peer Mediation group ... participated in symphonic and marching band for four years and captained the flag corps ... also involved in Debate and Women in Science ... earned prestigious Gold Award after 13 years with Girls Scouts ... participates in church youth group and Young Life ... will attend Northwestern University or the University of Michigan and study civil engineering.

Essay Quote - "An athlete does not have to perform at the college or professional level to become a role model: many of today's youths are influenced by the people in their everyday lives. As a result, conduct and sportsmanship not only affect the values of athletes themselves, but also develop the values of their peers outside of the athletic arena."

Girls Soccer -- Amy Myers, Cadillac. Earned four varsity letters in soccer, three in skiing and one in tennis ... voted team MVP in soccer twice ... participated in Youth In Government for four years, Student Council for three years and class council for one ... sang in Treble and Chorale Choir throughout high school and in the Praise Band as an underclassman ... member of National Honor Society and church youth group ... will study political science or pre-law in college.

Essay Quote - "Sportsmanship doesn't always relate to sports, sometimes one has to be a good sport in a work related environment. One has to accept others ideas and even compromise to make them better. It takes teamwork to accomplish a task well and sportsmanship to maintain healthy relationships with coworkers."

Softball -- Amy Fleming, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central. Awarded four varsity letters in softball, three in volleyball and two in basketball ... will captain softball team in the spring ... named all-conference as a freshman and junior, and holds school records for games played and career batting average ... member of National Honor Society ... participated in symphonic and wind ensemble bands as well as marching band as an underclassman ... volunteered at church and in community and with youth sports camps in three sports ... will study elementary education and Spanish in college.

Essay Quote - "Sportsmanship is a lesson that athletes carry on into their lives. They learn to be competitive, friendly, and respectful at the same time. I have been fortunate to have many coaches who have taught me how to play the games competitively and aggressively while still maintaining that high level of sportsmanship we all should have. Learning good sportsmanship early ensures that it will continue throughout an athlete's career as well as in their life beyond sports."

Boys Tennis -- Ryan David Litwiller, Ithaca. Earned three varsity letters in tennis and two in cross country ... tennis Regional Finalist and named team's Most Improved as a junior ... co-captained cross country team as a senior ... elected Vice-President as a junior and Treasurer as a senior of Class Council ... participated in Business Professionals of America as an underclassman, winning first place at states in the Basic Programming Competition ... also involved with Model United Nations and in the School Musical ... member of National Honor Society ... will attend Central Michigan University or Western Michigan University and study computer engineering.

(more)

3-3-3 – Spring Scholar-Athlete Award Recipients

Essay Quote - "Is there more to sports than winning? This is the big question in competitive sports today. All athletes are out to win, but some will cross the line and cheat or play dirty to win. Athletes like this don't care how they win. What is the joy of winning if a person doesn't have the personal satisfaction of being a good sport along with the win? I believe winning is important, but how you win is even more important."

Boys Track & Field -- Steven I. Lockwood, Alpena. Awarded multiple letters in track and field and football ... earned all-area honors in discus as a junior ... captain and MVP of the football team as a senior ... served as Vice-President of Student Council for four years ... member of National Honor Society ... involved with the Bike and Boot Club, as well as being a Peer Mentor, at school ... also participates on the youth advisory board for HANDS (HIV AIDS Network and Direct Services) and as a student representative for the anti-drug and alcohol group, KAPUT (Kids and Parents United Together ... will study secondary education at Hope College or Alma College.

*Essay Quote - "Years ago, concerns about sports centered around safety issues to protect young athletes. In the new millenium, let's extend those safety concerns to address a new issue - maintaining good sportsmanlike behavior **on** and **off** the playing field. Mandatory classes for athletes and parents will only serve to reinforce the idea we've been taught all along - that sports themselves are merely the vehicle we use to learn the valuable life lessons good sportsmanship teaches us."*

Girls Track & Field -- Megan Elizabeth Dana, Saginaw Heritage. Earned four letters in track and three in cross country ... multiple-year captain for both sports ... named all-county second team in cross country as a junior and track team MVP as a sophomore ... member of Class Council for four years and National Honor Society for three ... also participated on Homecoming Float Committee and Prom Planning Committee ... involved with peer counseling and volunteer tutoring at school ... received Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizens Award ... attended two mission trips to Mexico to build homes, participated in eucharistic and hospitality ministries at church, and has logged over 400 hours of community service ... will study architecture in college.

Essay Quote - "School sports are offered to teenagers for fun, for competition, and for growth. Day after day of practicing can build confidence, maturity, and self-discipline in any athlete with a good attitude. Every drop of sweat may be complemented by the satisfaction of improvement."

Other winter finalists by sport for the Scholar-Athlete Award were: Baseball -- Oliver J.

Wolcott, Plymouth Canton; Jared Stasik, Frankenmuth; Jeffery James Courter, Rockford; Joe Hawley, Bloomfield Hills Lahser; Jeff Salling, Mesick; Collin O'Keefe, Grand Ledge. **Girls Golf --** Christina J. Slupek, Plymouth Canton; Courtney Ann Hyun Rheinhardt, Clio. **Softball --** Angela N. Nue, Plymouth Canton; Mari Doremire, Fruitport; Erin Sigelko, Reese; Cynthia Blaszak, Lake City; Amy Chelovich, Bloomfield Hills Lahser; Stacey Meyers, Adrian Lenawee Christian. **Girls Soccer --** Jessica Betel, West Bloomfield; Molly K. Wickenheiser, Monroe St Mary Catholic Central; Rondi Lounds, St Johns. **Boys Tennis --** Brian Doughty, North Farmington; David J. Hiniker, Ann Arbor Pioneer; Luke Ruse, Allegan.

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4-4-4 – Spring Scholar-Athlete Award Recipients

Boys Track & Field -- Neil Marshall, Litchfield; Michael Lusardi, Troy Athens; Travis Young, Leroy Pine River; Joel Clark, Warren Woods-Tower; Robert Ross Coleman, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern; Jacob Grice, Sandusky. **Girls Track & Field** -- Trisha Matelski, Harbor Springs; Colleen Ann Brady, Jonesville; Deborah Michelle Lada, Birmingham Groves; Carolyn Adamson, Big Rapids; Jessica Schore, Grosse Pointe North; Laura Ketchum, Otsego.

Students applying for the Scholar-Athlete Award must be carrying at least a 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) grade-point average, and have previously won a letter in a varsity sport in which the Michigan High School Athletic Association sponsors a postseason tournament. Other requirements for the applicants were to show active participation in other school and community activities and produce an essay on the importance of sportsmanship in educational athletics.

Fall honorees were: Becky A. Stepp, Waterford Kettering, girls basketball; Tom Hakim, Clinton Township Chippewa Valley, boys cross country; Karen Elizabeth Latus, New Buffalo, girls cross country; Kevin Christopher Cleary, Grosse Pointe North, football; Jack McKinnon, St. Ignace, boys golf; Robert Ross Coleman, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern, boys soccer; Kathryn Ladewski, Ann Arbor Pioneer, girls swimming & diving; Priya Malviya, Holland, girls tennis. Winter honorees were: Reed J. Langton, Monroe St. Mary Catholic Central, boys basketball; Antonette Bitonti, Pontiac Notre Dame, girls competitive cheer; Christine Victor, Grosse Pointe North, girls gymnastics; Christopher Weier, Warren DeLaSalle, ice hockey; Kirk Anderson, Negaunee, boys skiing; Kate Quirk, Traverse City Central, girls skiing; Jeremy R. Backus, West Bloomfield, boys swimming & diving; Amy Lyn King, Pigeon Laker, girls volleyball; Justin Alan DeLay, Roscommon, wrestling.

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,300 public and private senior high schools and junior high/middle schools which exists to develop common rules for athletic eligibility and competition. No government funds or tax dollars support the MHSAA, which was the first such association nationally to not accept membership dues or tournament entry fees from schools. Member schools which enforce these rules are permitted to participate in MHSAA tournaments, which attract approximately 1.6 million spectators each year.

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