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Fall Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarships Recipients Announced

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Feb. 6 – The Michigan High School Athletic Association's Scholar-Athlete Award program has selected its eight scholarship recipients for the 2001 fall sports season.

Farm Bureau Insurance, in its 13th year of sponsoring the award, will give a \$1,000 college scholarship to each of the eight fall sports winners, the first of 24 total scholarships to be presented, 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 23. Commemorative plaques will be given to other finalists in recognition of their accomplishments.

The eight Scholar-Athlete Award honorees for the 2001 fall sports season are: Jaime Fornetti, Kingsford, girls basketball; Armon Mahajerin, Saginaw Heritage, boys cross country; Angela Hiner, Monroe Jefferson, girls cross country; Timothy Kareem Khoury, Cass City, football; Brian Hammer, Elk Rapids, boys golf; Jeffrey G. Shumer, North Farmington, boys soccer; Sarah Gelwicks, Monroe St. Mary Catholic Central, girls swimming and diving; and Noorain Fatima Khan, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central, girls tennis.

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

Girls Basketball -- Jaime Fornetti, Kingsford. Lettered three times in basketball and four times in track & field ... MVP of basketball team as a junior ... All-U.P. Basketball Dream Team ... Great Northern U.P. Conference Player of the Year ... part of school-record 800-meter relay team ... member of National Honor Society and Student Council ... participated in French Club, Drama Club, and was Treasurer for Tri-Hi-Y ... volunteered for Humane Society and captained her American Cancer Society "Relay for Life" team ... will attend Washington University at St. Louis, Hillsdale College, Albion College, Butler University or DePaul University and study pre-medicine.

Essay Quote - "There are 'little girls' peering out from bleachers all across America, looking up to high school athletes and placing them on pedestals that stand far apart from those belonging to the rest of the world. It is an athlete's responsibility to be aware of these eyes and never let them down."

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Boys Cross Country -- Armon Mahajerin, Saginaw Heritage. Earned three varsity letters in cross country and one in track & field ... two-year captain and MVP of cross country team ... first team all-conference cross country ... served as Appeals Board Chairperson for two years ... participated in Student Assembly and as Class Council Treasurer for four years ... member of National Honor Society and Quiz Bowl/Academic Olympiad teams ... Vice President of Multi-Cultural Club and three-year member of Student Affairs Committee ... involved with Habitat for Humanity, Adopt-a-Highway, and American Cancer Society "Relay for Life" ... will study computer science at Michigan State University or the University of Michigan.

Essay Quote - "From high school athletics I have learned to not be over-aggressive toward others and to avoid the consequences of always comparing myself to others. Rather, I seek my personal best and accept it. I have raced with some of the best runners in the state, and I honor their great abilities. I would love to be at their level, but I know that I have tapped all of my potential, and this brings me satisfaction."

Girls Cross Country -- Angela Hiner, Monroe Jefferson. Awarded three varsity letters in cross country and track & field ... named cross country team captain as a senior and second team All-Huron League as a junior ... served as Secretary for National Honor Society ... participated all four years in high school State Solo and Ensemble Festival and earned two Division I ratings ... participated on school's Attendance Appeal Board for three years ... volunteered as a tutor and for American Red Cross ... earned Girl Scout Gold Award ... will attend Valparaiso University or Michigan State University.

Essay Quote - "I believe in applying myself fully to any endeavor I choose to pursue. I have devoted a great deal of time and effort to running during my high school years. However, I know that I must keep athletics in a perspective that reminds me that they are not the most important things in life. Getting caught up in a state of mind that focuses only on personal performance and winning contradicts the purpose of high school athletics. What an athlete can learn from participating in sports reaches far beyond their physical capabilities. Teamwork, respect, and other aspects of sportsmanship share an even greater role in the lessons sports teach young athletes."

Football -- Timothy Kareem Khoury, Cass City. Lettered two times in football, basketball, and track & field ... elected captain of football team ... voted all-conference scholar-athlete in football, basketball, and track & field ... member of Foreign Language Club for three years and served as President and Diploma de Merito ... participated in Student Council and school plays ... member of National Honor Society ... played in jazz, concert, marching, pep, and honors band and received U.S. National Band Award ... volunteered as a church organist and for American Red Cross blood drives ... will study computer engineering at the University of Notre Dame, the University of Michigan, Harvard University, Northwestern University or Valparaiso University.

Essay Quote - "Sportsmanship does affect athletes and their peers. It can label them as the 'good guy' or the 'bad guy.' It determines how much one truly enjoys and respects the game they participate in. It can also mold the way one approaches the life they have ahead of them. The importance of sportsmanship is not an over-debated topic, but a reality that everyone should take to heart."

Boys Golf -- Brian Hammer, Elk Rapids. Earned three varsity letters in golf and baseball and one in cross country ... captained golf team for two seasons ... voted to all-conference and all-region golf team two years and all-state as a senior, member of all-conference and all-region baseball team ... member of academic all-state golf and baseball teams ... received Sportsman of the Year award ... participated in band, jazz lab, S.A.D.D., and was Vice President of National Honor Society ... received National Honor Society Volunteer of the Year award ... was Science Olympiad Class C state runner-up and state champion, and Bottle Rocket,

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Trajectory, and Scrambler state champion ... volunteered for Salvation Army, Elk Rapids Harbor Days, and coordinated Detroit Sister School project ... will study business management at Northwestern University, Calvin College or Hope College.

Essay Quote - "Sportsmanship is not about winning or losing, it is about playing the game. True good sports are the people who can compete to the utmost of their ability, yet walk away from the experience with a positive outlook. The true student-athletes of today's age not only are classy and honorable in victory, but also in defeat. People have become obsessed with winning and sending off a positive vibe. However, if the masses were really wise they would see the value in acting with good sportsmanship rather than putting so much emphasis on winning."

Boys Soccer -- Jeffrey G. Shumer, North Farmington. Three-year letter winner in soccer and two-year winner in track & field ... captained soccer team as a senior and earned a spot on the Western Lakes Athletic Association All-Division team ... named to all-district, all-region, and honorable mention all-state team as a junior ... elected junior and senior class President ... served as President of National Honor Society ... participated in school musical, elite choirs, and earned Merit award each of four years as a peer mediator ... also volunteered with West Bloomfield Public Library and American Heart Association ... involved in American Legion Boys' State and received Mayor Award ... will attend the University of Michigan or the University of Pennsylvania and study business.

Essay Quote - "High school is about maturing, learning, and growing. One thing that has helped me mature greatly has been my participation in high school athletics. I have learned how to work with others, and that often the best accomplishments come from successful teamwork. I have gained leadership skills that I apply to everyday life. I have learned how to make quick decisions and how to react with a level head under pressure. I have learned that most things in life worth achieving come from practice, hard work, and passionate beliefs. I have experienced the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat, and I have learned the importance of always shaking hands with my opponents, no matter the outcome at the end of a game. I haven't necessarily learned lessons from the sport of soccer, but rather from my educational high school soccer experiences."

Girls Swimming & Diving -- Sarah Gelwicks, Monroe St. Mary Catholic Central. Lettered four years in swimming & diving, soccer and synchronized swimming ... named swimming all-league and all-county three times ... state champion in synchronized swimming in 1998 and 1999 and received Coach's Award ... honored as one of America's Champion Athletes ... participated in Spanish Club, Rotary Interact Club, Student Senate, and Global Youth Leadership Conference ... member of National Honor Society ... volunteered at Immaculate Heart of Mary Motherhouse and as coach and tutor at St. John Grade School ... active at St. John Catholic Church ... will study mechanical engineering at the University of Notre Dame.

Essay Quote - "Sportsmanship establishes community, creates rules, and produces a level of fairness in both sports and society. Consequently, these three aspects of sportsmanship make for a positive environment for athletic and social growth. Our attitude on the playing field demonstrates the overall level of sportsmanship that we possess in our lives. This sportsmanship within athletic competition is the first step to an overall more positive and benevolent atmosphere in real life."

Girls Tennis -- Fatima Khan, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central. Awarded three letters in tennis and was captain senior year ... MHSAA Regional finalist, voted all-conference and all-area honorable mention as a senior ... member of student council and treasurer of senior class ... participated in forensics and team captain for nationally ranked (top 10) Model United Nations team ... finished as Science Olympiad state champion three times in three different events ... received Girl Scout Gold Award, volunteered with

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youth group and Young Women for Change ... President/Founder of Islamic Youth Group of Grand Rapids ... also awarded YWCA Tribute! Award ... plans to study cellular biology or communications in college.

Essay Quote - "Sportsmanship is an integral aspect of life; it reaches far beyond athletics and competition. For this reason, it should play an even more important role in educational athletics. It is during these impressive times that students learn skills and discover talents that will help them succeed later in life. Exemplifying sportsmanship is a disciplined approach that forces one to accept the consequences of an honest effort."

Other fall finalists by sport for the Scholar-Athlete Award were: **Girls Basketball** -- Jamie Lynn Barbour, Dearborn Edsel Ford; Jennifer DeClerck, Warren Cousino; Sarah M. Hawley, Hart Lakeshore Public Academy; Amanda Lyon, Mesick; Andrea McNab, Saginaw Nouvel; Kacey Mohre, Charlotte. **Boys Cross Country** -- Adam Benedict Chartier, Menominee; Kevin McCabe, Allen Park Cabrini; Joseph Person, Birmingham Seaholm; Timothy S. Sukta, Jackson Christian; Jeffrey Scott Weber, Grandville. **Girls Cross Country** -- Genevieve Barrett, Battle Creek Pennfield; Katharina Obser, White Lake Lakeland; Jena M. Rokos, Spring Lake; Jane Catherine Stieber, Boyne City; Erin Walsh, Fenton. **Football** -- Conrad Bird, Haslett; John Russell Chambers, Grosse Ile; Nicholas R. Erdman, Stevensville Lakeshore; Scott Andrew Kortlandt, Novi; Kyle Marc Kolbe, Clare; Michael Kelly Reed, Marquette. **Boys Golf** -- Jesse Dixon, Ann Arbor Greenhills; Travis J. May, Battle Creek Pennfield; Robert C. Nyblad, Kent City; Corbin Tyler Swiastyn, Owendale-Gagetown; John Wright, Bloomfield Hills Lahser. **Boys Soccer** -- Matthew A. Carey, Richland Gull Lake; Andrew S. Cavis, St. Clair; Brian Flietstra, Hudsonville Unity Christian. **Girls Swimming & Diving** -- Joanna Laethem, Caro; Lynn Pastor Visser, Jenison. **Girls Tennis** -- Karyn Bartels, Kalamazoo Christian; Kristal Janne Fears, Detroit Renaissance; Lindsey E. Moore, St. Clair.

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.

Winter sport scholarship recipients will be announced on Feb. 13, and spring sports honorees will be announced on Feb. 20.

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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