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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 2002 spring sports season.

Farm Bureau Insurance, in its 13th 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 23. Commemorative plaques will be given to other finalists in recognition of their accomplishments.

The seven Scholar-Athlete Award honorees for the 2002 spring sports season are: Shane Patrick Duba, Grand Rapids West Catholic, baseball; Julie Pollock, Midland, girls golf; Kelly Hackney, Lansing Catholic Central, girls soccer; Kalee Iacoangeli, Monroe Jefferson, softball; Charles Andrew Bassett II, Grand Haven, boys tennis; Ryan W. Gall, Livonia Churchill, boys track and field; and Rachel Hooley, Litchfield, girls track and 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 -- Shane Patrick Duba, Grand Rapids West Catholic. Earned three varsity letters in baseball and golf, and four in ice hockey ... named to baseball all-district team as a junior, all-conference golf team as a senior, and honorable mention all-conference for hockey as a junior ... served on Principal Advisory Board for two years, Student Council for four years, and was class President for three years ... member of National Honor Society, Varsity Club, and S.A.D.D. ... participated in 2001 Michigan American Legion state tournament ... also involved with Grand Rapids Housing Board of Appeals and Grand Rapids Rotary Interact Club ... will be studying aerospace engineering at the University of Michigan, Northwestern University or the University of Notre Dame.

Essay Quote - "The thing that separates educational athletics from all other athletic bodies in the end is the respect for the greater picture. Where else do you play for a team that monitors academic and disciplinary records to determine your role on the team? This is why sportsmanship is so important to educational athletics. There is no money on the line, just pride and character. Whether you win or lose doesn't determine your level of income, just your level of commitment. Being a scholar-athlete means playing for more than wins or losses, it means playing for integrity."

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

Girls Golf -- Julie Pollock, Midland. Lettered two times in golf and with the fall and winter pompon squads ... named to all-academic golf team and All-Saginaw Valley honorable mention last spring ... member of National Honor Society and Student Council, class Vice President as a senior ... played in school marching, concert, and symphonic bands ... part of youth mission trips to Detroit, Washington D.C., South Carolina, and Oklahoma ... participates in First United Methodist Church youth group and Habitat for Humanity ... volunteered for Celebrate Midland ... will attend Calvin College, Hope College or Grand Valley State University.

Essay Quote - "High school athletics can be very competitive. But without good sportsmanship, the competition would be hollow. Victory without values is meaningless. True sportsmanship cannot be taught just to be an external expression; it must be an internal motivation. A positive, optimistic, respectful attitude is my definition of sportsmanship in educational athletics and makes school sports enjoyable."

Girls Soccer -- Kelly Hackney, Lansing Catholic Central. Earned four varsity letters in soccer and two in basketball ... was elected captain and team MVP for defense in soccer twice ... named to all-east side, all-league, and all-district soccer teams ... participated in Student Senate for four years and class Vice President for three years ... member of National Honor Society, Ambassadors, Spanish Club, and Vice President of Todo Por Cristo ... volunteered with Habitat for Humanity and Big Brothers Big Sisters ... will study journalism in college.

Essay Quote - "The silent lessons, those of poise, composure, humility, and overall good sportsmanship have most profoundly impacted not only my athletics, but all areas of my life. Throughout my thirteen or so years of sports, coaches and experiences have especially taught me what I know and firmly believe about sportsmanship and its vitality in athletics and life. Those who exemplify class, composure, and overall good sportsmanship earn and deserve the title 'athlete.'"

Softball -- Kalee Iacoangeli, Monroe Jefferson. Awarded three varsity letters in softball, two in volleyball, and one in basketball ... member of Student Council for four years and was Treasurer for Distributive Education Chapters of America senior year ... participated in Speech Club, Renaissance, and Spanish Club ... member of National Honor Society ... was co-director for Art and Environmental committee at St. Charles Church ... volunteered as a tutor and teacher's aid for religious education ... is undecided on course of study and college to attend.

Essay Quote - "Sportsmanship may be practiced most often in educational athletics, but when school is done, the lessons learned can assist us in everyday life. Sportsmanship forms the basis on how we interact and treat other people regardless of where we are. It teaches us respect for each other as human beings and also can help us cope with the wins and losses of our everyday lives. It can be the key to survival."

Boys Tennis -- Charles Andrew Bassett II, Grand Haven. Earned two varsity letters in tennis and participated in cross country ... part of Student Advocacy Society all four years of high school ... member of Student Senate, Secretary of sophomore class, Treasurer of junior class, President senior year ... earned first chair violin in symphony orchestra, played for Holland Youth Symphony ... participated in Toastmasters, Grand Haven City Human Relations Commission, and Community Youth Foundation ... also involved with Boy Scouts of America, received Eagle Scout Award ... member of National Honor Society, and was President senior year ... will study biochemistry and Spanish in college.

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

Essay Quote - "The entire purpose of school sports is to develop a team network, foster camaraderie, create positive attitudes and build sportsmanship in the individual. Sportsmanship is the lesson of life. No one will win all the time and it's important to play by the book and be courteous to everyone. A person who is a good sport will be more successful in many aspects of life and high school athletics is where sportsmanship should take root."

Boys Track & Field -- Ryan W. Gall, Livonia Churchill. Awarded three letters in track & field and four in cross country ... holds school record in 800 meters ... served on Spirit Club and Student Council for four years, class Treasurer three years, Council Parliamentarian as a senior ... involved with S.A.D.D., Ski Club, Math Club and French Club ... member of National Honor Society ... performed in school play ... also volunteers at a nursing home, telethons, charity races, food drives, and as a reader at elementary schools ... will study political science and philosophy in college.

Essay Quote - "From the beginning, values of sportsmanship must be instilled to children in interscholastic athletics. Respect for one's opponents, one's teammates, and one's self is fundamental to sportsmanship. Sports are about setting all differences aside to compete on a level playing ground. The ability to give the best possible effort, and when all is finished, the ability to leave it behind."

Girls Track & Field -- Rachel Hooey, Litchfield. Earned three letters in track & field and two in basketball and volleyball ... qualified for MHSAA Finals three times in discus ... named discus all-area and was regional champion twice ... honored as academic all-state as a junior ... participated in student government for four years as class Treasurer ... Secretary of National Honor Society ... also participated in concert, jazz, marching, and pep band, S.A.D.D., and Junior Achievement ... won high school Theater Guild Actress of the Year award twice and has been in local theater productions since fourth grade ... active in United Methodist Church Youth Group ... will study in the school of literature, sciences, and the arts at the University of Michigan.

Essay Quote - "Sportsmanship starts friendships, ensures safety, increases quality in competitors, as well as in your own team, and helps everyone to learn more about their sport. It is something that educational athletics can pride itself in, and by showing that, it instills the same pride accompanied with character and responsibility in the youth of our schools."

Other spring finalists by sport for the Scholar-Athlete Award were: Baseball -- Steven Michael Bailey, Peck; Blake Michael Britten, Sterling Heights; Joshua A. Latz, Ovid-Elsie; David Madigan, Redford Thurston; Matthew Glen Pridgeon, Reading; Douglas Mark Richley, Manistee Catholic Central. **Girls Golf --** Lauren Elizabeth Grzanka, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Central; Christine M. Heath, Birmingham Seaholm. **Girls Soccer --** Julie Daniel, Saline; Sarah Gelwicks, Monroe St. Mary Catholic Central; Rachel Weller, Grandville Calvin Christian. **Softball --** Brienna Alger, Shepherd; Sarah Bagierek, Saugatuck; Randin L. Brown, Farmington; Maggie Dillon, Grosse Pointe Woods University Liggett; Kara Francisco, Elk Rapids; Allyson Leigh Neuman, Caro. **Boys Tennis --** Alan Chu, Ann Arbor Huron; Andrew Moon, Flint Powers

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

Catholic; T.J. Warschefsky, Okemos. **Boys Track & Field** -- Adam William Hellebuyck, Bay City Central; Scott Andrew Kortlandt, Novi; Jeffrey Lance Rhoads, Fairview; Michael Sachau, Lansing Catholic Central; Bryce David Slavik, Fulton Middleton; Kyle Williams, Delton Kellogg. **Girls Track & Field** -- Holly Beckers, Allegan; Nora Rose Cooper-Surma, Ludington; Dayna Jean Kasza, Kalkaska; Bethany Kittle, Novi; Cassidy Lee Volek, Birch Run; Chelsea Wininger, Taylor Kennedy.

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: 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. Winter honorees were: Ryan Darrell Kaminski, Midland Bullock Creek, boys basketball; Laura Riebschleger, Houghton Lake, girls competitive cheer; Kim Le, Muskegon Reeths-Puffer, girls gymnastics; Cameron Dingwall, Mattawan, ice hockey; Matt Gotham, Ironwood, boys skiing; Nicole Murch, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern, girls skiing; Brian Murphy, Birmingham Hills Brother Rice, boys swimming and diving; Suzanne McGoe, Grosse Pointe Woods University Liggett, girls volleyball; and Matthew Oliver Harsha-Strong, Novi, 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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