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Scholar-Athlete Applications Now Available Exclusively In Digital Form In Member Schools, On Internet

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Sept. 26 – Applications for one of the Michigan High School Athletic Association's most popular programs – the Scholar-Athlete Award – are now available exclusively in digital format through the MHSAA Web Site (www.mhsaa.com) and on the annual CD-ROM sent to member school senior high school athletic directors.

The Scholar-Athlete Award, underwritten by Farm Bureau Insurance, highlights the value that extra-curricular activities play in the total education of a high school student, often improving their academic achievements in the process. The Scholar-Athlete Award is in its 12th year of awarding \$1,000 scholarships to 24 top student-athletes from MHSAA member schools, and which will recognize nearly 3,000 outstanding individuals in 2002-03. Since its inception in 1988-89, Farm Bureau Insurance has presented over \$275,000 in scholarships through this program.

The Scholar-Athlete Award presents a scholarship in every activity in which the Association sponsors a post-season tournament. The scholarships may be used at the institution of higher learning the recipients attend during the first year at those colleges.

Students applying for the Scholar-Athlete Award must be graduating during the 2002-03 school year, be carrying an unrounded 3.50 (on a 4.0) grade point average, and have won a varsity letter in the sport in which they are applying prior to their senior year. The 24 sports the MHSAA sponsors post-season competition are girls basketball, boys and girls cross country, football, boys golf, boys soccer, girls swimming and diving, and girls tennis in the fall; boys basketball, girls competitive cheer (not sideline cheerleading, dance or pom pon), girls gymnastics, ice hockey, boys and girls skiing, boys swimming & diving, girls volleyball, and wrestling in the winter; and baseball, girls golf, girls soccer, softball, boys tennis, and boys and girls track and field in the spring.

Applicants will also be required to show involvement in other school-community activities and submit an essay on the importance of sportsmanship in educational athletics. Each MHSAA member school

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2-2-2 – Scholar-Athlete Applications Available Digitally

will be allowed to nominate one student-athlete in each championship activity, and an individual may be nominated in more than one sport.

Applications are available only in digital format – no paper application materials have been printed in 2002-03. Students may obtain a copy from their school from the CD-ROM, or the downloadable forms on the MHSAA Web site need only be saved to a computer, filled out in nearly any word processing program – in Windows or Macintosh platforms -- and then printed out to be attached to the required essay and letters of recommendation. Students must submit their applications to their school athletic director, principal or guidance counselor by November 25, 2002. Students should check with their school administration to determine who the internal coordinator for the program is. Schools have additional materials to submit with student applications, and each school must submit all of its applications at one time. Individually mailed applications to the MHSAA office will not be accepted.

A direct link to the application materials is available until November 25 on the home page of the MHSAA Web site.

A committee composed of school administrators from across the state will select regional and statewide winners in January, with the winners to be announced in February. All applicants, finalists and scholarship recipients will be announced on the MHSAA Web site. The 24 scholarship recipients will be recognized at the MHSAA Boys Basketball Finals at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing on March 22, 2003.

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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MEDIA ADVISORY - For additional information about Farm Bureau's involvement in this program, contact Luke Schafer, Public Relations Manager, at 517/323-7000.

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