



**media
information**



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Scholar-Athlete Award Winter Scholarship Recipients Announced

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Feb. 8 – The Michigan High School Athletic Association's Scholar-Athlete Award program has selected its 11 scholarship recipients for the 2005 winter sports season.

Farm Bureau Insurance, in its 16th year of sponsoring the award, will give a \$1,000 college scholarship to each of the 11 winter sports winners. Farm Bureau will present a total of 28 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 19. Commemorative plaques will be given to other finalists in recognition of their accomplishments.

The Scholar-Athlete Award honorees for the 2005 winter sports season are: Nikolas Burkhart, Pellston, boys basketball; Philip J. McDonald, Saginaw Heritage, boys bowling; Grace H. Williams, Sandusky, girls bowling; Amanda Louise Winn, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern, girls competitive cheer; Calie E. Thompson, Trenton, girls gymnastics; Kris Young, Ann Arbor Pioneer, ice hockey; Brady Donnelly, Harbor Springs, boys skiing; Sarah Conkle, Bellaire, girls skiing; Charles Joshua Holmes, Alma, boys swimming and diving; Stephanie Booms, Marysville, girls volleyball; and Ben Wales, Otsego, wrestling.

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

Boys Basketball – Nikolas Burkhart, Pellston. Lettered three times in basketball, baseball and golf...co-captain of the golf team senior year...member of all-conference golf team and named team MVP junior and senior year...co-captain of the baseball team junior year...Most Improved Player sophomore year in baseball...named all-region shortstop and All-State second team...academic all-district and all-region in baseball junior year...member of Drama Club and Earthen Vessels Bible Study for two years, also served as co-leader...member National Honor Society two years...volunteered at voting booths senior year...served as Worship Leader at Maple River Mennonite Church for two years...member of Music Team at church senior year...currently undecided on choice of school...plans to study art.

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2-2-2 – Winter Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarship Recipients Announced

Essay Quote – “To me, the real joy in athletics is in the experience instead of any honors or trophies won. It is proving myself superior, not by underhanded methods, but by hard work and talent that makes my athletic experience enjoyable. A dishonest or unsportsmanlike victory feels worse than any loss that I have ever experienced.”

Boys Bowling – Philip J. McDonald, Saginaw Heritage. Awarded two varsity letters in bowling...earned all-academic status...member National Honor Society three years...member of French, Spanish and Multicultural Club four years...member Quiz Bowl Team junior year...President of National Honor Society senior year...practiced pianist and artist...volunteer at the Michigan Cardiovascular Institute senior year...volunteered for four years at the East Side Soup Kitchen and two years at the Saginaw County Humane Society...plans to attend Alma College and study pre-medicine.

Essay Quote – “Sportsmanship can be defined as conforming to the rules of a sport in a moral and ethical manner. It expresses the desire to enjoy a sport for the sake of playing that sport and improving one’s skills, not simply for the competition or the feeling of personal achievement. Respect, honor, self-control, and citizenship are all basic tenets of good sportsmanship which all student athletes should remember.”

Girls Bowling – Grace H. Williams, Sandusky. Earned three varsity letters in bowling...placed second at MHSAA Class C-D Bowling Regional and within top 16 in singles at the 2004 MHSAA Class C-D Bowling Finals...member of three-year conference and regional championship team 2004...starter in bowling...member of the marching and concert band freshman and sophomore year...National Honor Society Secretary two years...member of Redskins Against Illegal Drugs one year...volunteer for Sandusky Park Project four years...participant in Relay for Life Walk...volunteer at McKenzie Memorial Hospital during the summer...nominated for Silver Lining Award for volunteer service at local hospitals...will attend Central Michigan University to study business.

Essay Quote – “Important skills and personality traits have been obtained and polished, leadership and dedication among them. However, the quality of possessing and displaying sportsmanship is the most valuable gain. It is something essential to a successful athlete and individual in society.”

Competitive Cheer – Amanda Louise Winn, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern. Lettered three times in competitive cheer...also participated in sideline cheer in football and basketball...awarded Most Spirited in football cheer junior year...captain of the football cheer team junior and senior year...earned the Coaches Award for competitive cheer junior year...member National Honor Society two years...member of Wind Ensemble three years...member of marching and concert band two years...volunteered as a teacher’s aide for Sunday School and Vacation Bible Study at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church...volunteer at Safety Town...plans to attend either University of Michigan or University of Notre Dame to study architecture.

Essay Quote – “Correct conduct is crucial in any game, match or competition. Good sportsmanship is vital to be a good competitor, a good role model, and a good leader. By acting professional we can impact games and make sure they are enjoyed by every participant.”

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3-3-3 – Winter Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarship Recipients Announced

Girls Gymnastics – Calie E. Thompson, Trenton. Awarded four varsity letters in gymnastics and cross country, two in soccer and one in track...captain of the gymnastics team sophomore, junior and senior year...named the Most Valuable Gymnast freshman, sophomore and junior year...captain of the cross country team senior year...qualified for L.P. MHSAA Cross Country Finals as a freshman and junior...awarded the Cross Country Coaches Award freshman, sophomore and senior year...named the Most Improved Runner junior year...all-league gymnast freshman, sophomore and junior year...Student Council Treasurer junior and senior year...class representative three years...Spanish Club Treasurer senior year...member of National Honor Society two years...volunteer for Riverview and Trenton Goodfellows...participant in service projects for Church and Youth Group...will attend Grand Valley State University to study health services.

Essay Quote – “As I finish my four years of high school, there are so many experiences that have made me who I am. Of these things, my participation in educational athletics has been one of the most influential. Team victories and successes may last for a game or a season, but character shaped by sportsmanship will last a lifetime.”

Ice Hockey - Kris Young, Ann Arbor Pioneer. Lettered three times in hockey and baseball...earned two Harry Schmid Most Sportsmanlike Player Awards...member 2004 MHSAA Regional Ice Hockey championship team...member of the 2004 MHSAA Division 1 Baseball Championship Team...2004 academic all-district and all-region in baseball...awarded two Triple Crown World Series National Championships in baseball...member/participant National Honor Society and Student Leadership Day junior and senior year...member of Key Club two years and DECA one year...awarded three Character and Leadership Pins in geometry, English and earth science...volunteer at Blue Chip USA...organizer of Pioneer’s first white out... plans to attend University of Michigan or Wisconsin to study pre-business.

Essay Quote – “The most important lesson that I have learned through sportsmanship is to respect the game. No one person is ever going to be above the game and that the integrity of the sport lies within the individuals who participate within it. Sportsmanship taught me respect for competitors, and each other.”

Boys Skiing – Brady Donnelly, Harbor Springs. Awarded four varsity letters in skiing and soccer and one in tennis...named first team All-State in skiing...three time all-conference in skiing...earned Most Improved Award for skiing...named second team All-State and finished second at the 2004 MHSAA Class B-C-D Skiing Finals...three time member of all-region ski team...named Michigan High School Ski Coaches Scholar Athlete...awarded All-Conference Academic Achievement Award...team was semi-finalist in 2001 and 2002 MHSAA Division 4 Soccer tournament...participant in the concert and marching band four years...member National Honor Society three years...volunteer for Mana Project two years...member First Presbyterian Church Youth Group and Central United States Ski Association four years...currently undecided on choice of school and area of study.

Essay Quote – “Students across the state spend an endless amount of hours devoting their lives to success, and when this small populace does not work together, the beauty of their parallels is lost. The greatest of rivals share on undeniable similarity, dedication to the sport in which they long for accomplishment. It is for this reason that sportsmanship is an indisputable necessity for high school sports.”

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4-4-4 – Winter Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarship Recipients Announced

Girls Skiing – Sarah Conkle, Bellaire. Earned four varsity letters in soccer, and three in skiing and track and field...named third team All-State in skiing.... awarded local Wendy's Heisman Trophy for Track and Field...two-year regional and conference champion in skiing...captain of the soccer team...conference champions...member High School Musical four years and Student Council three years...President and Vice President of class...President, Vice President and Treasurer of Student Council...plans to attend either the University of Michigan or the University of Colorado to study biomedical or aeronautical engineering.

Essay Quote – “During a meet our teams compete against each other, but to us this fact is irrelevant. We cheer, congratulate, celebrate, and encourage one another, and it doesn't matter if we win or lose because we get to spend beautiful winter days out on the slopes. I only hope when I look back on my high school athletic career, I remember not only the records broken or milestones met but also the camaraderie of a team, the mayhem and antics of practices and bus rides, and life lessons I learned from friends and opponents.”

Boys Swimming and Diving – Charles Joshua Holmes, Alma. Awarded four varsity letters in swimming, two in golf and one in track and field...All-American and All-State in swimming...two-time Sportsmanship Award winner in golf...member National Honor Society three years...member Close Up two years... President of National Honor Society...earned Outstanding Citizen Award in Boys' State...volunteer at Community Café four years...President of Youth Advisory Council and member four years...volunteer Crop Walk three years...plans to attend Yale University to study political science and English.

Essay Quote – “Success does not, however, give our team the right to disrespect our opponents. Our success occurs only because of these opponents. If one does not respect their opponent then there is no glory in a victory and there is no pride in a win.”

Girls Volleyball – Stephanie Booms, Marysville. Lettered four times in volleyball and three times in basketball...member of MHSAA Lower Peninsula Class B championship team and All-MAC academic team in 2002, 2003 and 2004...All-State first team, All Blue Water Area first team and all-metro first team 2003 and 2004...named MVP of volleyball team junior year...captain of the basketball and volleyball team junior and senior year...earned Sportsmanship Award in basketball junior year...member of student council four years...class Vice-President and Secretary freshman and sophomore year...member National Honor Society three years...participant in March of Dimes Walk America and Jail & Bail three years...volunteer at Recreation Saturday Morning Girls Basketball four years...participant in Relay for Life two years...plans to attend Hillsdale College to study pre-medicine.

Essay Quote – “A highly regarded athlete who faces a loss accepts the defeat and uses it as a learning experience. Likewise, in triumph they are humble and never brag about their accomplishment. Over the many years of participating in educational athletics, I have come to realize that not everyone can win every game, and that losing can be a great learning experience.”

Wrestling – Ben Wales, Otsego. Awarded four varsity letters in wrestling, cross country and track and field...captain of the wrestling team twice...MHSAA Regional and District Champion in wrestling...two-time wrestling conference champion and all-county...two-time wrestling MHSAA finals qualifier...captain of the cross country team...two-time all-county in cross country...member and Treasurer of Student Council two years...member National Honor Society two years...member of SADD, Quiz Bowl, marching and concert band two years...Homecoming King 2004...member Kalamazoo Area Chemical Society Competition, DAR Good Citizen, Youth Editorial Staff for Kalamazoo Gazette and Voice Democracy one year...plans to attend Duke University to study biochemistry.

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5-5-5 – Winter Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarship Recipients Announced

Essay Quote – “Sportsmanship is the most essential component of high school sports. Without it, sports would not be able to function in a healthy, beneficial manner. However, more importantly, its absence would deny many students the opportunity to learn some of life’s most important lessons. Without a doubt, if we continue to push sportsmanship in high school athletics, we are extending its benefits to the classroom, the community and all of society.”

Other winter finalists by sport for the Scholar-Athlete Award were: **Boys Basketball** – Eric Berschback, Grosse Pointe South; Joe Cawood, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern; Brad Claggett, Battle Creek Central; David Presar, Harrison Township L'Anse Creuse; Jesse Reimink, Hudsonville; Jeffrey Steigerwald, Brown City. **Boys Bowling** -- Jeremy Pawlak, Warren DeLaSalle. **Girls Bowling** – Cathleen Kowalski, Farmington Hills Mercy. **Girls Competitive Cheer** – Andrea Jee-Sun Kaczmarek, Grosse Ile. **Girls Gymnastics**-- Lindsay Orgeck, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Northern. **Ice Hockey** - Mark Weber, Grand Rapids Catholic Central. **Boys Skiing** - John Stencil IV, Bloomfield Hills Lahser. **Girls Skiing** - Ashley Marie Sykes, White Lake Lakeland. **Boys Swimming & Diving** - Daniel Priestley, Birmingham Seaholml; Steven Herbert Weinberg, Ann Arbor Huron. **Girls Volleyball** - Laura Barclay, Hale; Lauren Buck, Flint Powers Catholic; Madison Clark, Sturgis; Lori Hoetger, Dearborn Divine Child; Jamie Marie Jacobs, Bay City Central; Jennifer Waters, Grand Haven. **Wrestling** - Jay Biessel, Yale; Zachary T. Comer, Alma; Patrick Goring, Wayne Memorial; Carl Reid Howe, Three Rivers.

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.

Spring sports honorees will be announced on Feb. 15. Fall award recipients were: Christina Ashley Maertens, Birmingham Seaholm, girls basketball; Jason Victor Hawley, Temperance Bedford, boys cross country; Kelly Nicole Sampson, Detroit Renaissance, girls cross country; Steve Short, Kingsford, football; Ross Osgood, Delton Kellogg, boys golf; Mark Weber, Grand Rapids Catholic Central, boys soccer; Emily Weslosky, Troy Athens, girls swimming & diving; Jenny Armstrong, Harbor Springs, girls tennis.

Farm Bureau Insurance, one of Michigan's major insurers, has a statewide force of 350 agents serving more than 380,000 Michigan policyholders. Besides providing life, home auto, farm, business and retirement insurance, the company also sponsors lifesaving, real-time Doppler weather tracking systems in several Michigan communities.

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6-6-6 – Winter Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarship Recipients Announced

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,500 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 -- A complete list of scholarship nominees and finalists for the Scholar-Athlete Award can be found by clicking on the Recognition link on the home page of the MHSAA Web Site, and then clicking on Scholar-Athlete Award. Information about scholarship recipients will be posted on the MHSAA Web Site according to the schedule listed in this release, and media in the markets of the scholarship recipients will be notified by fax the day before the public announcement. For more information about Farm Bureau Insurance, contact Luke Schafer, Public Relations Manager, at 517.323.7000. You can download the MHSAA's Scholar-Athlete Award logo from the MHSAA Web Site – click on Forms & Graphics off the home page.

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