



# media information



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 18, 2006

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## **AT&T Becomes MHSAA Corporate Partner, Underwriting Scope Award & Student Advisory Council**

**EAST LANSING, Mich. – Sept. 18** – Keeping school sports in their proper perspective and serving students have long been primary functions of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, and with the assistance of its newest corporate partner, AT&T, schools will be rewarded for their efforts to keep educational athletics educational and students will become more involved in the administration of these after-school activities than ever before.

AT&T's partnership with the MHSAA creates a new award which will honor four schools annually for their work in promoting the proper role of school sports. The Scope Award will honor one school in each enrollment class (A-B-C-D) with a \$2,500 cash award for doing the best job in promoting a sensible scope for educational athletics in their buildings and communities.

Details about the application process will be provided to schools soon. As part of that process, schools will be required to illustrate how the \$2,500 prize would be used to continue to promote the appropriate scope for school sports. The announcement of the winning schools and presentations will take place at selected MHSAA Final tournaments and in local venues later this school year.

AT&T will also sponsor the MHSAA's new Student Advisory Council, a 16-member group which will provide feedback on issues impacting educational athletics from a student's perspective, and also be involved in the operation of Association championship events and other programming.

Members of the Student Advisory Council will serve for two years, beginning as juniors. Eight new members will be selected annually to the SAC, with nominations made by MHSAA member schools. For the 2006-07 school year, the first eight students, all juniors, are already in place; and will be joined by eight new juniors next Summer.

The inaugural members of the MHSAA's Student Advisory Council are: Andria Baker, Constantine High School; Dustin Baker, St. Louis High School; Bryce Bilinski, Southgate Anderson High School; Brittany Bullock, Lansing Catholic Central High School; Rachel Gebauer, Alpena High School; Eric Howard, Hudsonville Freedom Baptist High School; Blake Laethem, Caro High School; Molly Waterhouse, Vicksburg High School. They will be joined in 2007-08 by eight additional students who will be appointed in April, 2007.

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## **2-2-2 – AT&T Partners With MHSAA, Creates Scope Award & Student Advisory Council**

The Student Advisory Council will meet four times each school year. In addition to assisting in the promotion of the educational value of interscholastic athletics, the council will discuss issues dealing with the 4 S's of educational athletics: scholarship, sportsmanship, safety (including health and nutrition), and the sensible scope of athletic programs. There will also be a fifth S discussed by the group -- student leadership.

As members of the Student Advisory Council, these students will act as a voice of Michigan's student-athletes; serving as a student sounding board for the MHSAA's Representative Council; assist in planning Sportsmanship Summits, Captain's Clinics and other student leadership events; participate in a yearly focus group about the state of high schools sports for Michigan State University's Institute for the Study of Youth Sports; and assist with medal ceremonies at MHSAA championship events.

AT&T will cover all of the expenses of the SAC, including the travel costs of member student-athletes to meetings and MHSAA tournaments. In addition, AT&T will make a \$1,000 donation to the athletic department of each school which is represented on the Student Advisory Council, which may be spent as each department sees fit.

"Involvement in the Student Advisory Council will be an outstanding leadership opportunity for these students," said Andy Frushour, Marketing and Special Programs Coordinator for the MHSAA. "We will discuss public speaking, and we will work on leadership skills as it relates to their class work, teammates and communities as a whole. SAC members will also learn about the MHSAA. The student-athletes will meet and work with MHSAA staff members while learning about the organization, MHSAA tournaments and the association's function in aiding member schools around the state."

"Over time, we have begun to provide more and more programming which directly serves students other than our post-season tournaments," said John E. "Jack" Roberts, executive director of the MHSAA. "We have used different forums to seek feedback from kids about their high school athletic experience. Through the generosity of AT&T, we can now, in a formalized way, get input from the student-athlete leadership of our state, and improve our program to our community leaders of tomorrow."

"It is not often that a large corporation works with a private, non-profit association of schools like the MHSAA and looks to underwrite programming which promotes after-school activities as just that – something which is after the school day chronologically and after the school's mission in importance," said Roberts. "Some corporate sponsorships do more to hurt the landscape of school sports by promoting so-called big time events, or national events or national television of high school sports – things we need nothing to do with. AT&T came to us wanting to promote a sensible scope for school sports and promoting student leadership -- the right things that school sports stand for. They're low on the commercialization side of school sports and high on the education side. We're glad they share our perspective of school sports."

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### **3-3-3 – AT&T Partners With MHSAA, Creates Scope Award & Student Advisory Council**

As a hometown service provider, AT&T is committed to improving the quality of education across the state of Michigan. AT&T believes that better education makes better communities and strives to contribute in a variety of ways.

“Athletic programs are important in our Michigan schools and AT&T is proud to support this educational initiative,” said Randy Feger vice president and general manager of AT&T Michigan. “We hope this program empowers student-athletes with the tools they need to be effective leaders in their sport and their school.”

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,800 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.

AT&T Inc., is one of the world's largest telecommunications holding companies and is the largest in the United States. Operating globally under the AT&T brand, AT&T companies are recognized as the leading worldwide providers of IP-based communications services to business and as leading U.S. providers of high speed DSL Internet, local and long distance voice, and directory publishing and advertising services. AT&T Inc. holds a 60 percent ownership interest in Cingular Wireless, which is the No. 1 U.S. wireless services provider with 57.3 million wireless customers. Additional information about AT&T Inc., and AT&T products and services is available at [www.att.com](http://www.att.com). © 2006 AT&T Knowledge Ventures. All rights reserved. Subsidiaries and affiliates of AT&T Inc., provide products and services under the AT&T brand.

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**MEDIA ADVISORY** – For more information about AT&T, contact Joe Fuhrman at 734.367.3554 or [jf5471@att.com](mailto:jf5471@att.com). You can download an AT&T logo suitable for reproduction at [www.attbrand.com](http://www.attbrand.com). You can download an MHSAA logo from the Media page of the MHSAA Web site. Media wishing to contact individual Student Advisory Council members may do so through the athletic director at each respective school.

**RL07-010**

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