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Scholar-Athlete Award Program Expands To 32 Scholarships; Applications Now Available On MHSAA Web Site

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Nov. 1 – The Scholar-Athlete Award, one of the Michigan High School Athletic Association's most popular programs, will expand again in 2005-06, awarding 32 \$1,000 scholarships to top student-athletes at member high schools.

The MHSAA-Farm Bureau Insurance Scholar-Athlete Award 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 17th year. Since its inception in 1988-89, Farm Bureau Insurance has presented over \$350,000 in scholarships through this program.

In expanding to 32 scholarships, the program will undergo some significant changes in the application process and the distribution of awards to better serve the MHSAA membership.

The first 30 scholarships will be presented on a graduated basis across the MHSAA's traditional class structure. From Class A schools, six boys and six girls will receive scholarships; from Class B schools, four boys and four girls; from Class C schools, three boys and three girls; and from Class D schools, two boys and two girls will be honored. The final two scholarships will be at-large minority selections, regardless of school size. The scholarships may be used at the institution of higher learning the recipients attend during the first year at those colleges.

Applications from individual schools will be limited to the number of available scholarships in their Class. Class A schools may submit the names of six boys and six girls; Class B schools may submit four boys and four girls; Class C may submit three boys and three girls; and Class D may submit two boys and two girls.

Students applying for the Scholar-Athlete Award must be graduating during the 2005-06 school year, be carrying an unrounded 3.50 (on a 4.0) grade point average, and have won a varsity letter in a sport in which the MHSAA sponsors a post-season tournament prior to their senior year. The 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, boys and girls bowling, girls competitive cheer (not sideline cheerleading, dance or pom pon), girls gymnastics, ice hockey, boys and girls

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skiing, boys swimming & diving, girls volleyball, and wrestling in the winter; and baseball, girls golf, boys and girls lacrosse, girls soccer, softball, boys tennis, and boys and girls track and field in the spring.

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

Applications are available only in digital format. 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 21, 2005. Students should check with their school administration to determine who the internal coordinator for the program is, and if the school has an earlier internal application deadline. 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.

The application materials will be available online until November 21 on the Recognition 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 32 scholarship recipients will be recognized at the MHSAA Boys Basketball Finals at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing on March 25, 2006.

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.

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.

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