



michigan high school athletic association

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Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarship Recipients For Classes C & D Announced

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Feb. 12 – Ten student-athletes at Class C and D member schools of the Michigan High School Athletic Association have been selected to receive scholarships through its Scholar-Athlete Award program.

Farm Bureau Insurance, in its 19th year of sponsoring the award, will give a \$1,000 college scholarship to 32 individuals who represent their member school in at least one sport in which the Association sponsors a postseason tournament. The first 30 scholarships are awarded proportionately by school classification and the number of student-athletes involved in those classes; and there are two at-large honorees which can come from any classification.

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 15. Commemorative medallions will be given to other finalists in recognition of their accomplishments.

The Class C Scholar-Athlete Award honorees are: Dustin E. Baker, St. Louis; Julie Fielder, Manchester; Sonny Gast, Bridgman; Zachary Putnam, Hale; Jessica A. Racine, Ishpeming-Westwood; and Conor Wolohan, Saginaw Nouvel.

The Class D Scholar-Athlete Award scholarship recipients are: Joshua M. Campbell, Kingston; Christopher Ellenberger, Onaway Area; Melissa Hale, Atlanta; and Clara Leutheuser, Hillsdale Academy.

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

Dustin E. Baker, St. Louis. Earned four varsity letters in track and cross country, and two letters in basketball. Member of MHSAA championship cross country team as a sophomore. Cross country team was also Regional champion as a sophomore and junior; academic all-state junior year and also earned the Coach's Award as a junior. Track team captain junior year. Current member of the MHSAA Student Advisory Council. Class president all four years; student council present senior year. Two-time recipient of the Exchange Club Student of the Month. Future Farmers of America Chapter President junior and senior years. 4-H "I Dare You Award" recipient. Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership Award winner has a junior. Plans to attend Michigan State University, majoring in pre-veterinary medicine.

Essay Quote – *"Sportsmanship plays a pivotal role in allowing individuals to win with dignity and lose with grace. This lifelong lesson will allow for the competitor to not only succeed on the playing field, but also in the arena of life."*

Julie Fielder, Manchester. Awarded three letters in volleyball and two in basketball and softball. Volleyball captain for two years. Awarded volleyball MVP three years in a row. Volleyball first-team all-conference junior and senior years. First-team all-conference in softball junior year. Scholar-athlete award winner for 10 sports seasons. SADD President and student council treasurer senior year. National Honor Society secretary junior and senior years. Riverfolk Festival volunteer and Chicken Broil volunteer all four years. Emergency room volunteer as a senior. Plans on attending Michigan State University, pursuing a degree in nursing.

(more)

2-2-2 – Class C & D Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarship Recipients Announced

Essay Quote – *“Good sportsmanship is not just what you do on the field, it is hopefully the way you conduct your life both on and off the field. In the same way, unsportsmanlike behavior on the field is probably an indication of your off-the-field conduct.”*

Sonny Gast, Bridgman. Earned four letters in soccer, two in basketball, and one in each cross country and volleyball. Received Hardest Worker Award in soccer as a freshman and junior; and as a senior on the cross country team. All-conference academic athlete all four years. Student senate vice president as a junior; and president as a senior. Voted homecoming queen senior year. Organized blood drives as well as homecoming and winter fest activities. Two-year Quiz Bowl captain; named to the all-state team. Chapter President and Founded the Bridgman Junior State of America chapter. Four-year DECA member and Science Olympiad participant. Has volunteered countless hours towards political campaigns, as well as at church and in the local soup kitchen. Future plans include attending Hillsdale College, majoring in pre-law and journalism or political science and journalism.

Essay Quote – *“Sportsmanship is a critical component to cultivating the integrity of student- athletes. Exhibiting class, a high regard for values and being a gracious winner or loser undoubtedly follows athletes throughout their lives.”*

Zachary Putnam, Hale. Received four letters in track and three in basketball and cross country. Academic all-conference and all-state in basketball junior year. Basketball captain junior year; and also earned second team all conference. Two-time qualifier for MHSAA Track Finals. Earned Eagle track award as a junior. League champion in the shot put junior year. Most Improved in cross country as a sophomore. Sophomore class winter homecoming representative. Member of National Honor Society and Choir all four years. Little Eagles basketball coach. Eagle Scout. Participated in a mission trip to Tennessee. Plans on attending Grand Valley State University to pursue a degree in engineering.

Essay Quote – *“Athletes who continually demonstrate good sportsmanship will find the game of life filled with success. Sportsmanship is what you are. It is not only in your attitude, but it is who you are as a person.”*

Jessica R. Racine, Ishpeming-Westwood. Four-year letterwinner in basketball and track; received one letter in tennis. All-Upper Peninsula Dream Team basketball as a junior. All-conference first team as a sophomore and junior, *Detroit Free Press* Honorable Mention as a junior. Basketball team captain sophomore through senior seasons. Basketball team was conference champion freshman and sophomore seasons as well as District champion sophomore year. U.P. MHSAA Division 2 tennis champion at Number 3 Singles as a senior. Business Professionals of America state qualifier as sophomore and junior. Spanish club vice president. Member of the Youth Advisory Committee for four years. Plans on attending Michigan Technological University and majoring in exercise science.

Essay Quote – *“Having this dignity and respect for others, sportsmanship, is more important than being skilled in a sport. The ability to play in educational athletics is temporary, but experiencing the benefits of practicing sportsmanship in educational athletics will last a lifetime.”*

Conor Wolohan, Saginaw Nouvel. Earned four letters in soccer, three in tennis, and two in basketball. All-district and region soccer junior and senior years. All-state honorable mention soccer player as a junior. Team captain in soccer and tennis senior year. Member of MHSAA runner-up boys basketball team junior year. Math club treasurer as a junior; math club president as senior. National Honor Society member sophomore, junior and senior years. 2007 MHSAA Sportsmanship Summit Representative. Sat on the Saginaw Community Foundation Youth Board for the past three years. Volunteer tutor and parish Eucharistic minister. Plans to attend either the University of Notre Dame or the University of Michigan to pursue a degree in engineering.

Essay Quote – *“Respecting all those involved, including the opposing team, opposing fans and coaches, referees, as well as your own team, fans and coaches is all crucial in displaying sportsmanship. One must not be only grateful in victories and accepting in losses, but be committed to fair play, ethical behavior, and integrity.”*

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3-3-3 – Class C & D Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarship Recipients Announced

Other Class C girls finalists for the Scholar-Athlete Award were: Melissa H. Seelye, Boyne City; Samantha Vanderberg, Grandville Calvin Christian; Brenna Field, Kalamazoo Hackett; Anna E. Fester, Lawton; Rebecca Holmquist, Leroy Pine River; Emily Steinkraus, Marcellus; Jenna Lange, Marlette; Erica M. Fedewa, Pewamo-Westphalia; and Andrea Nichole Bommarito, Springport.

Other Class C boys finalists for the Scholar-Athlete Award were: Trenton Swank, Athens; Kevin A. Knight, Boyne City; Jordan Rahme, Fulton; Tyler Yake, Iron Mountain; Peter J. Vihtelic, Muskegon Catholic Central; James Murtha, Saginaw Nouvel; Timothy Bergsma, Southfield Christian; Brian Randall Halas, St. Charles; and Parker Prusick, Traverse City St. Francis.

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

Joshua M. Campbell, Kingston. Four-year letterwinner in football and baseball, and two in basketball. Second-team all-league in football as a junior. Baseball first-team all-league and team MVP as a junior. Student council member all four years, and president his senior year. National Honor Society member junior and senior years. Active in local church praise band as a drum player. Active in winter warm-up for past last three years. Coached fifth and sixth-grade football and basketball as a sophomore and junior. Plans to attend Saginaw Valley State University, majoring in engineering or teaching.

Essay Quote – *“Whether it’s persevering through a rough time or telling the truth even when it’s not in our best interest, the lessons we learn by participating in athletics during high school cannot be replaced”*

Christopher Ellenberger, Onaway Area. Awarded two letters in track, cross country, football, basketball and baseball. Second-team all-area and all-conference cross country junior year. Student council member freshman and sophomore years. Participated in symphony band as a freshman. Member of the National Honor Society sophomore, junior and senior years; also sat on the Northeast Michigan Youth Advisory Council as a junior and senior. Earned a “2” in state solo and ensemble as a freshman. Has participated in Youth Group, Goodfellows and Boy Scouts for the past four years and is currently a Life Scout working on an Eagle project. Plans to attend Grand Valley State University and study movement science.

Essay Quote – *“Our coaches emphasize the importance of sportsmanship in playing any sport. Yet words can only express an idea or behavior while actions display the true meaning.”*

Melissa Hale, Atlanta. Received four letters in track, three in basketball, and two in both volleyball and softball. Has qualified for MHSAA Track & Field Finals in three events each of the last three years, winning the long jump as a freshman, and placing third in the 400-meter dash as a sophomore and junior. North Star League MVP as a sophomore and junior. School record-holder in the long jump, 200-meter dash, 400-meter dash and 800-meter run. First-team all-conference volleyball junior and senior years; MVP as a senior and co-captain sophomore and senior years. National Honor Society secretary. Active in church youth group. Has held leading roles in countless theatric productions. Plans on attending Cornerstone University and majoring in elementary education.

Essay Quote – *“Some traits, on the other hand, such as respect, working hard toward a goal, and gracefully accepting victory and defeat can only be learned if sportsmanship is present in all aspects of the sport.”*

Clara Leutheuser, Hillsdale Academy. Four-year letterwinner in basketball, volleyball, and track. All-conference in both basketball and volleyball three consecutive years; MVP award winner in volleyball senior year. Track accolades include all-state and academic all-state as a sophomore and junior; Regional champion as a junior as well as MVP award winner. Secretary of the student council as a freshman. Member of National Honor Society and has done various types of volunteer work through the organization. Sang with the school choir freshman through junior years. Future plans include attending Hillsdale College to study art history.

Essay Quote – *“Sportsmanship -- when the athlete can see his or her efforts reflected in the competition and values – it makes the game worth playing and completes the satisfaction of winning.”*

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4-4-4 – Class C & D Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarship Recipients Announced

Other Class D girls finalists for the Scholar-Athlete Award were: Betsy A. Brown, Adrian Lenawee Christian; Roshalle J. Van Dorp, Auburn Hills Oakland Christian; Molly Margaret Poel, Bellaire; Jordan Alexander, Carsonville-Port Sanilac; Susan Elizabeth Herman, Lake Leelanau St. Mary; and Bethany A. Merfeld, Waldron.

Other Class D boys finalists for the Scholar-Athlete Award were: Nathan Glen Feldpausch, Fowler; Tom S. Wenzlick, New Lothrop; Trevor J. O'Meara, Onaway; Robert A. Cieslak, Pellston; Justin T. Litzner, Pellston; and David Dugree, Powers North Central.

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.

Farm Bureau Insurance, one of Michigan's major insurers, has a statewide force of 450 agents serving more than 450,000 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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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 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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