



media information

1661 ramblewood drive east lansing, mi 48823 517.332.5046 fax-517.332.4071 www.mhsaa.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 19, 2008

Contact: John Johnson or Andy Frushour

517.332.5046 or media@mhsaa.com

MHSAA Web Site Media Page: www.mhsaa.com/media

Class B Scholar-Athlete Award Scholarship Recipients Announced

EAST LANSING, Mich. – Feb. 19 – Eight student-athletes at Class B 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 post-season 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 B Scholar-Athlete Award honorees are: Lindsay Lee Bo, Fruitport; Marisa Coury, Detroit Country Day; Brian Fiani, Detroit Country Day; Derek Harrington, Kingsford; Daniel Johns, Comstock Park; Andrew Plaska, Zeeland West ; Jennifer Schaafsma, East Grand Rapids; and Clarissa Tamez, Essexville Garber

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

Lindsay Lee Bo, Fruitport. Received four letters in cross country, three in track and one in soccer. Two-year captain of the cross country team; earned second-team all-conference track accolades. Earned special award as a freshman on the soccer team for remarkable work ethic. National Honor Society president junior and senior years. Student Advisory Council member and active in church youth group. Attended the MHSAA Women in Sports Leadership Conference. Has been a tutor in three subjects all four years. Plans to attend Lee University and major in health education or Spanish education.

Essay Quote - *“True sportsmanship is doing the right thing when nobody is watching, and it involves telling the truth despite the consequences. When it comes to sportsmanship, acting appropriately when convenient does not make the cut.”*

Marisa Coury, Detroit Country Day. Awarded two letters in basketball and softball. Team MVP softball player as a sophomore; softball team won back-to-back District championships sophomore and junior years. Member of MHSAA Semifinalist basketball team as a sophomore. Received the highest rating in solo & ensemble for solo performance as a junior. Has played numerous roles in school theatrical productions. Participates as a mentor in the Little Sister program, and has volunteered for four years at the Detroit Country Day open house. Plans to attend the University of Michigan in its pre-medicine program, with a major in chemistry.

Essay Quote - *“Educating the up-and-coming athletes of the future about the values of sportsmanship while continuing to promote the spirit of decency at your own age level, helps to find and formulate a future of athletic competitiveness with moral tenancy.”*

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Brian Fiani, Detroit Country Day. Awarded three letters in tennis, two in soccer, and one each in football, basketball and track. School was MHSAA Lower Peninsula Division 3 tennis champion his sophomore year, runner-up his freshman and junior years. Champion of multiple tournaments around the state in the United States Tennis Association. Sportsmanship award winner of Ann Arbor Junior Open and Schoolcraft College Summer Classic. Helped school win MHSAA championship in soccer as a sophomore; and reached the Semifinals as a junior. Peer tutor all four years. Environmental Club president freshman through junior years. Plans on majoring in business administration.

Essay Quote - *“Sportsmanship is the quality of character showing respect, courtesy, fairness, and a positive attitude regardless of the situation. Although competition sometimes blinds athletes and coaches, it cannot blind the kindness that emanates from the heart.”*

Derek Harrington, Kingsford. Four-year letterwinner in tennis and two in skiing. Two-time Great Northern Conference Champion; and two-time Upper Peninsula Singles Champion. Also the recipient of All-U.P. honors. Earned rookie of the year and most dedicated player awards in tennis. Has spent four years as a volunteer assistant coach for youth baseball and basketball teams as well as manager of the girls tennis team. Member of the National Honor Society. Active member of the U.P. Trappers Association. Plans to attend Michigan Technological University and major in business management.

Essay Quote - *“We learn that no matter the score at the conclusion of the game, we can leave the gym with head held high, with character, with dignity, and with the knowledge that we did our best and treated others with respect.”*

Daniel Johns, Comstock Park. Earned four letters in tennis, two in basketball and one in soccer. Was named team captain and MVP during tennis career; also held team captain honors at all three levels on the basketball team. National Honor Society president. Participated in the marching band on the drum line; received freshman of the year honors and was a section leader. Chosen as the only student judge in the West Michigan Talent Showcase. Active in church youth group. Future plans include attending Michigan State University to study secondary education.

Essay Quote - *“Losing is still the pits. I will never enjoy it, but I’ve learned over the years to accept it along with the wins, balancing the joys of success with the bittersweet lessons that only good sportsmanship can teach.”*

Andrew Plaska, Zeeland West. Awarded three letters in both football and track. Named captain of the football team as a senior and the track team as a junior and senior. Earned all-conference football honors as a sophomore and senior; all-conference track honors as a sophomore and junior and was also academic all state in track as a junior. Vice President of the National Honor Society senior year; helps to organize the tutoring program. Active in Student Senate, Youth Group and Youth Leadership Commission. Was the Zeeland Public Schools district communications team student representative both junior and senior years. Plans to attend the University of Notre Dame, majoring in pre-medicine.

Essay Quote - *“To see a coach not only encourage but demand such sportsmanship from his players was a welcome contrast to some of the coaching attitudes I had seen throughout the year.”*

Jennifer Schaafsma, East Grand Rapids. Received three letters in lacrosse and field hockey. Captain of the lacrosse team as a junior and senior. Member of Fellowship of Christian Athletes. First-team Division 2 field hockey; earned all-state field hockey honors. Plays the tuba in the school marching band; president of the band. National Honor Society member as a junior and senior. Has participated on two mission trips. Active in mentoring elementary school students about drugs, peer pressure and anger. Plans to attend The College of Wooster or Kenyon College, majoring in science or psychology.

Essay Quote - *“It’s not the winning goal fans will remember, but the character and personality of the teams playing. Sportsmanship is what defines that team and its athletes.”*

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Clarissa Tamez, Essexville Garber. Four-year letterwinner in cross country and track; and one in volleyball. Most improved cross country runner as a freshman and sophomore. As a junior earned most valuable runner on the cross country and track teams. Team captain of the cross country team as a junior and senior, as well as the track team as a senior. Two-time relay MHSAA Finals qualifier in track. Marching band drum major sophomore through senior years. National Honor Society vice president junior and senior years; class vice president as a junior and student council secretary/treasurer as well as class president as a senior. Has actively participated in Relay for Life the last three years and is also the school blood drive coordinator. Plans to attend Central Michigan University to major in architecture/interior design.

Essay Quote - *“One of the larger aspects of sportsmanship is teamwork. Whether it is your team or your opponents, there is accountability to one another.”*

Other Class B girls finalists for the Scholar-Athlete Award were: Carly D. Stone, Allegan; Lyndsay Berger, Charlotte; Michele Booms, Freeland; Angie Bockheim, Grand Rapids West Catholic; Jade Evink, Hamilton; Kelsey Elizabeth DeLand, Ida; Theresa Walsh, Jackson Lumen Christi; Abigail Jane Longhurst, Marshall; Lauren Davis, Marysville; Sarah Cressman, Sturgis; Michelle L. Revord, Tawas Area; and Danielle Petzak, Zeeland West.

Other Class B boys finalists for the Scholar-Athlete Award were: Nathan Weeks, Belding; Scott Riley McKeel, Benzie Central; Jordan DUBY, Birch Run; Sean M. Collon, Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook-Kingswood; Nick Bennett, Charlotte; Zachary Harmon, Grand Rapids Forest Hills Eastern; Ethan T. Shaver, Menominee; Joe LaMay, Montrose; Chris Bowen Kendro, Spring Lake; Daniel Etz, St. Clair; Michael Gundlach, Sturgis; and Aaron Zimmerman, Yale.

Previously announced were the Class C and D scholarship recipients. The Class C Scholar-Athlete Award honorees are: Dustin R. 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.

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.

RL08-054