



VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

1642 State Farm Blvd., Charlottesville, VA 22911

434-977-8475 / 434-977-5943 (fax)

www.vhsl.org

The Virginia High School League is an alliance of Virginia's public high schools that promotes education, leadership, sportsmanship, character and citizenship for students by establishing and maintaining high standards for school activities and competitions.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2008

CONTACT: Mike McCall, 434-977-8475

mmccall@vhsl.org

AIISTATE VHSL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

10 Outstanding students representing the very best of Virginia's graduating seniors will be honored during a special awards luncheon on May 19

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA — Ten high school seniors representing all parts of the state have been selected to receive the 2008 Allstate / VHSL Achievement Award, the highest honor given by the Virginia High School League, to students who have excelled in the classroom and in athletic and academic activities.

"Allstate believes in the Virginia High School League's mission to serve youth by establishing and maintaining standards for student activities and competitions that promote education, personal growth, sportsmanship, leadership and citizenship," said Megan Brunet, Allstate communications manager corporate relations. "This year, Allstate had the honor of participating in the Achievement Award process and witness extraordinary students who are achieving success both personally and academically. We are proud to support the Virginia High School League and the Achievement Award."

A committee of high school principals, media members, and Allstate representatives selected 10 state winners of \$1,000 scholarships from a pool of over 200 students representing nearly 100 high schools. These 10 winners will be recognized during a luncheon beginning at 11:15 a.m., Monday, May 19 at the Omni Charlottesville Hotel.

The winners are:

GROUP AAA FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: Kelly Reinwald of North Stafford High School

Kelly is the rare athlete, who not only competed in four sports, but excelled in each earning 11 varsity letters in cross country, winter track, basketball and soccer, as well as all-district, all-region and all-state accolades. More impressively, she was named captain of her soccer team as a junior and senior; and the cross country team as a senior. She also excelled in the classroom maintaining a 4.37 GPA and is a member of the National Honor Society; Senior Class officer; founding member of the Orange Fever school spirit club; Student Leadership Council, Anti-Bully Council and is a member of FBLA and DECA. She also found time to coach club soccer and youth basketball teams, as well as tutoring students at a local elementary school. Kelly plans to study business at Canisius College.

GROUP AAA MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: Nathan Richards of E.C. Glass High School

Nathan has made his mark on the athletic fields at E.C. Glass, earning 13 varsity letters in cross country, indoor track, outdoor track and soccer. He earned all-state honors in indoor and outdoor track and twice in cross country; and was an all-district selection in soccer. Along with his 4.4 GPA, Nathan is a member of the Mathematics Honor Society, the National Spanish Honor Society, and the National Honor Society. Nathan is a youth elder at his First Presbyterian Church and has also earned the honor and distinction of being an Eagle Scout. Catherine Phillips, his cross country and track coach at E.C. Glass, says that Nathan "is a perfect example of a true student-athlete

who continues to make E.C. Glass and the VHSL proud in the classroom, on the field, and in the community.” Andrew will attend Yale University this fall and plans to study biology.

GROUP AAA ACADEMIC OF THE YEAR: Jacob Derr of North Stafford High School

“I firmly believe that speech is the core of success in academia, and that those who know and appreciate the art of rhetoric are forever given an advantage over their peers.” These were the opening words of Jake’s application essay and convey exactly his passion for debate, forensics and scholastic bowl. President of his debate and forensics teams and scholastic bowl captain, Jake guided North Stafford’s academic teams to district, regional and state honors. He is enrolled in the rigorous Commonwealth Governor’s School program where he has maintained a superior 4.3 GPA, earned high AP scores, and received Highest Academic Achievement Awards. He is a member of the National Honor Society; serves as a Focus Mentor and was selected to serve on North Stafford’s student Leadership team. Jake will attend Ohio University to study broadcast journalism.

GROUP AA FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: Kristin Berrang of Waynesboro High School

Kristin’s accomplishments serve as an inspiration to her classmates. Her 15 letters are spread across four varsity sports, but more impressively is the fact that she was named captain of her soccer team for three seasons, and selected captain of the Waynesboro cross country and swim teams. She was also elected Key Club president and vice president of the National Honor Society. Kristin also earned all-district selection in Concert Choir; Frestones Show Choir; and WHS selection to Virginia Girls State; and as a Junior Page in Regional Model General Assembly. She maintained a 4.27 GPA while taking an advanced class load while volunteering numerous hours to Kiwanis and key Club service projects. She plans to attend the University of Virginia.

GROUP AA MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: Brett Olinger of Broadway High School

Brett is a three-sport athlete, earning 11 varsity letters in football, indoor and outdoor track during his high school career. He is the reigning Group AA champion in the 300 meter hurdles winning the event as a sophomore and junior and will be going for a three-peat this season. As a senior, he was named a first team all-district running back in football and added all-state honors in the 55 meter hurdles in indoor track with a second place finish. In addition, he accumulated seven indoor track and outdoor track district and regional individual championships in the 55 meter, 110 meter and 300 meter hurdles. Not only is Brett a talented athlete, but he is also a talented student in the classroom maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Brett plans to study business management at Radford University in the fall.

GROUP AA ACADEMIC OF THE YEAR: Matthew Lipscomb of Salem High School (Salem)

“Matt Lipscomb is simply the best of the best. In my 20 years of teaching, I rank no one higher than Matt in intelligence, drive, creativity, teamwork, talent and character.” wrote Salem High School’s drama teacher Rachel Sailer in her recommendation letter. Matt was named outstanding actor at the state theatre competition the past two years. He has helped Salem win three straight Forensics team championships, while winning an individual state title in Serious Dramatic Interpretation. He also played four years on the successful Spartans football team. Matt carries a 4.1 GPA, and is a member of the National Honor Society; National Spanish Honor Society and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He is a youth president at his Calvary United Methodist Church and participated in Relay for Life and Habitat for Humanity. Matt plans to study theatre at VCU.

GROUP A FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: Kelly Montgomery of Chatham High School

Kelly earned 10 varsity letters in her high school career, including three each in basketball and volleyball; and four in softball. She captained all three sports and earned all district honors in each, including 2nd team all-state honors in softball. Named a Wendy’s High School Heisman Award state finalist, Kelly has twice been named Chatham’s Female Scholar Athlete. She also excels in the classroom. Kelly is the 2008 graduating class valedictorian; SCA president; member of the National Honor Society and National Senior Beta Club. She is also very active outside of the classroom working with food drives, UNICEF, the homeless, Habitat for Humanity, and in service to her church teaching vacation Bible school, attending summer missions and serving at youth group events. Kelly plans to attend Gardner-Webb University and study physical therapy and counseling.

GROUP A MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: David Harrison of Rural Retreat High School

David personifies the term “student athlete.” He has earned 14 varsity letters in football, wrestling and soccer and served as captain in each sport. He placed third in the state wrestling tournament and was named to the all-state team in football as a running back, as well as earning all-region honors in soccer. He also shines off the field academically attending the Southwest Virginia Governor’s School for Advanced Math and Science and is enrolled in New River and Wytheville Community College dual credit classes and is a member of the National Honor Society. David’s community service interests include building a beach volleyball court at Rural Retreat High

School as part of his Eagle Scout project. David has accepted an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point

GROUP A ACADEMIC OF THE YEAR: Savannah Arwood of Powell Valley High School

"I remember my first dance recital. After my performance, I came to my mother and said, 'Mommy, I made the people smile.'" That's how Savannah began her Allstate VHSL Achievement Award application essay and she continues to display that same enthusiasm and attitude to inspire other students at Powell Valley. Savannah earned the outstanding actor award at this year's state theater competition and helped Powell Valley to a 2nd place finish. In addition to theatre, Savannah participated in forensics, creative writing, cheerleading, track and basketball at both Lee County and Powell Valley. She was member of the Beta Club, Science Club, Spanish Club, Pep Club, SGA representative, Homecoming Queen and choir while maintaining a 3.7 GPA. She plans to study English and theatre education at East Tennessee State University.

ANDREW MULLINS COURAGEOUS ACHIEVEMENT: Eleanor Gray Mullen of Western Albemarle High School

No one would have blamed Eleanor Gray Mullen if she chose to blend into the background. After all, a "typical" high school student isn't profoundly deaf; doesn't communicate through sign language; doesn't need an interpreter to process academic information and the coaches instructions. Eleanor Gray, however, isn't your typical high school student. In fact, she's excelled. She earned letters in basketball, lacrosse and was a founding member of the first high school crew team in Central Virginia. She was elected captain of her basketball team as a junior and senior and served as the crew team's captain.

According to Patricia Johnson, Eleanor Gray's middle school speech-language pathologist, "(Eleanor Gray) could have played it safe and nobody would have blamed her. She chose 'the road less taken.' She chose to challenge herself in all aspects...Her bravery never ceased to amaze me."

Eleanor Gray is just as determined to succeed away from her athletic competitions. She is the only student at Western Albemarle serving on both the Honor Council (judge) and the Executive Committee (senior class officer). She is a Silver Medal award winner in the National Latin Exam and all her core academic courses are taken at the advance honors or advance placement level. Eleanor Gray's service to her community includes delivering the keynote address at the 2007 Virginia Department of Education summer conference on "The State of Deaf Education in Virginia's Public Schools." She has helped raise over half a million dollars to support the University of Virginia Children's Hospital through the Mickey Matthews Charity Golf Tournament created in her honor. She also gave the keynote address on how as an infant she was saved from a life-threatening virus by the UVA Children's Hospital Pediatric Intensive Care Unit.

Eleanor Gray will attend the University of Georgia in the fall.

ABOUT THE Allstate / VHSL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Allstate / VHSL Achievement Awards have been presented since 1992 to the outstanding male athlete, female athlete and academic activities participant in Groups A, AA and AAA. One student is also recognized with the Andrew Mullins Courageous Achievement Award, which honors courageous achievement in overcoming exceptional circumstances to find success in VHSL activities.

Students must have earned a minimum 3.00 grade point average and have made significant contributions to VHSL activities in order to qualify for consideration. Nominees are also heavily involved in other activities and volunteer work in the school and in the community. A completed application includes a 500-word student essay, letters of recommendation from two people who know the student's work well, and an endorsement by the school principal.

ABOUT VHSL

The Virginia High School League offers athletic competition in baseball, boys and girls basketball, cheer, boys and girls cross country, field hockey, football, boys and girls golf, gymnastics, boys and girls lacrosse, boys and girls soccer, softball, boys and girls swimming, boys and girls tennis, boys and girls indoor and outdoor track, boys and girls volleyball and wrestling. Academic activities are student publications (newspaper, magazine and yearbook), creative writing, theatre, forensics, debate and scholastic bowl.

The VHSL is an outgrowth of the Washington and Jefferson Societies at the University of Virginia, and today includes 311 accredited public schools. Nearly 200,000 students participate each year in VHSL athletic and academic programs.

Virginia's public high schools, through their alliance as the Virginia High School League, serve their youth by establishing and maintaining standards for student activities and competitions that promote education, personal growth, sportsmanship, leadership and citizenship.

ABOUT ALLSTATE

The Allstate Corporation is the nation's largest publicly held personal lines insurer. A Fortune 100 company, with \$157.5 billion in assets, Allstate sells 13 major lines of insurance, including auto, property, life and commercial. Allstate also offers retirement and investment products and banking services. Allstate has operations in 49 states and Canada. Customers can access Allstate products and services through Allstate agencies, www.Allstate.com and 1-800-Allstate.

- VHSL -