



VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

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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.

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THE ALLSTATE FOUNDATION/ VHSL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

10 Outstanding students representing the very best of Virginia's graduating seniors honored

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA — Ten high school seniors representing all parts of the state have been selected to receive the 2012 The Allstate Foundation / 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.

A committee of high school principals and media members selected 10 state winners of \$1,500 scholarships from a pool of nearly 150 students representing 64 high schools.

"The Allstate Foundation is proud to recognize these outstanding students for their stellar performance in the classroom and with their extracurricular activities," said Shelva Clemons, Communications Manager for The Allstate Foundation.

"Clearly these young leaders are the future and it is an honor to support them in their future endeavors for higher education".

The winners are:

GROUP AAA FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: Alexis Chaet, Freedom (South Riding) High School

Alexis earned 12 varsity letters in cross country, gymnastics and track. She captained her cross country and gymnastics team as junior and senior; and track team as senior team. In gymnastics, Alexis had top five finishes in the all-around competition at the district and region competitions and helped her team to a third place finish at the state championships as a senior. She received the coaches award in cross country and leadership award in gymnastics as a senior. She also participated in Creative Writing. Alexis is president of the National Honor Society; class valedictorian; is founder of her school's BEAST tutoring program; a Hope Buddy mentor; a PEER counselor and serves as a Student Court juror. Alexis plans on attending William and Mary to study Neuroscience or biochemistry.

GROUP AAA MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: Jason Will, Potomac Senior High School

Not only has Jason earned six varsity letters in cross country and lacrosse, he is also member of his varsity debate team an editor of his yearbook. He has captained his lacrosse team as a junior and senior, while earning first-team all-district, all-region honors as well as high school all-American honors following his junior season. In addition, he is his school's all-time single-season and career leader in goals scored. In the classroom, Jason is ranked second in his class and was selected as a University of Virginia Jefferson Scholar. He is president of the National Honor Society; leading representative on Potomac's Athletic Leadership Council; serves on the Freshman Mentoring Program and member of the Spanish Honor Society.

Jason will attend the University of Virginia and plans to major business.

GROUP AAA ACADEMIC OF THE YEAR: Christopher Middleton, Warwick High School

“By now it has almost become a ritual: I close my eyes, inhale and exhale twice, open my mouth and begin to speak” wrote Christopher in his application essay. An award-winning captain of the Forensics and Debate team, Christopher’s opening ritual has rewarded him with district, region and state awards for Lincoln-Douglas Debate, including a second place finish as a junior. In addition he also distinguished himself with district and regional championships in Impromptu Speaking and Extemporaneous Speaking, as well as a top five finish in both at state competitions. A National Achievement Finalist and an AP Scholar with Distinction, Christopher will attend Stanford University where he plans to study history and government.

GROUP AA FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: Miceile Barrett, Fauquier High School

Miceile earned 13 varsity letters in her high school career, including four in field hockey, four in track, three in swimming, and two in tennis. She captained her field hockey team earning first-team all-state, all-region and all-district honors as well as region player of the year twice. She finished her career with 106 goals making her the sixth player in the nation to score over 100 goals. Miceile is the first female athlete at Fauquier High School to have her uniform number retired. Miceile also excels outside the playing fields. She is a member of the National Honor Society; Mu Alpha Theta math honor society; SCA Treasurer; director of culinary arts for the French Club; VP of the Latin and Science Club and is a member of the Vex Robotic Team. Miceile will attend Johns Hopkins as a Woodrow Wilson Fellow and play varsity field hockey.

GROUP AA MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: Harrison Scharf, E.C. Glass High School

One of the most versatile student-athletes in Virginia, Harrison has earned 14 varsity letters, including four in baseball and golf; along with three each in indoor track and outdoor track, while earning all-state honors in golf, indoor and outdoor track. Group AA’s top sprinter, Harrison is the 2012 indoor 55 meter champion and heading into this spring, the defending outdoor 100 meter champion. In addition, he has claimed 14 first-place finishes in district, region and state indoor and outdoor track championship events over the past three years. He was also the Region III golfer of the year in 2011 and has earned all-district honors in baseball; as well as serving as team captain in both golf and track. Harrison is a member of the National Honor Society and Math Honors Club. He plans to run track at the University of Pennsylvania and study engineering.

GROUP AA ACADEMIC OF THE YEAR: Sam Taylor, Marion Senior High School

“His promise as a student was immediately evident as he was extremely well-read, culturally aware, and inquisitive about the world around him” is how Marion Senior High School’s theatre coach Todd Necessary described him in his recommendation letter. Sam earned eight letters in theatre and forensics. He was chosen Southwest District Best Actor three times, Region IV Best Actor twice and the Outstanding Actor Award at the VHSL state championships. He also claimed first place at the Region IV and Southwest District Forensics competition in comedic duo. In addition, Sam also earned five varsity letters in soccer (4) and basketball (1); while earning all-district honors in soccer and served as team captain. Sam’s numerous academic and student achievements include AP Scholar with Distinction; Class Vice-President; William & Mary Leadership Award and the Big “M” Scholar Athlete Award. Sam will enter the theatre and performance studies program at the University of Chicago.

GROUP A FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: Lindsay Lawson, Eastside High School

Lindsay earned 16 varsity letters in her high school career, including four each in softball, basketball, volleyball and track. She earned all-district and all-region honors in in all four sports, including all-state honors in volleyball, softball and track. She was selected district and region player of the year in basketball as a senior as well as Cumberland District Hitter of the year in volleyball as sophomore, junior and senior. AHP of Virginia newspapers selected Lindsay to receive season leadership awards as a sophomore, junior and senior. In addition to her athletic achievements, Lindsay is a member of the National Honor Society, The Fellowship for Christian Athletes, Mu Alpha Theta math honor society and the Library Club, while maintaining a 4.06 GPA. Lindsay plans to attend the University of Virginia at Wise to study chemistry and pharmacy.

GROUP A MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR: Drew Collins, Central (Wise) High School

Drew has lettered in five varsity sports. He earned letters in football, wrestling, baseball and track earning all-district and all region honors in football and wrestling. Drew also claimed three top four state wrestling finishes, including a state championship as a junior, to go along with two district and one region championship. He served as team captain in football for two years and wrestling as a senior. Drew also shines off the field academically. He earned academic all-district and all-region honors in football, baseball, wrestling and track. He is a member of the National Honor Society; Mu Alpha Theta math society and is a member of the Valley AeroSpace Team. He also was awarded the U.S. Marine Corps Distinguished Athlete Award; Wise County Sports Leadership Team; AHP Winter Sports leadership Award and the Kiwanis Citizenship Award. Drew plans to attend Virginia Tech and study chemistry.

GROUP A ACADEMIC OF THE YEAR: Megan Dishner, George Wythe (Wytheville) High School

“Megan has demonstrated outstanding leadership and maintained a clear sense of purpose...she has demonstrated the highest level of dedication” is how George Wythe High School forensics and theatre coach Lorna King described Megan in her letter of recommendation for this award. Megan’s VHSL activities included forensics, theatre and yearbook. As a member of the forensics team, she won one district title; placed third in the region and fifth at state. As an actress, Megan won best actress at the district level and honorable mention at the regional level as well. Megan also earned varsity letters in swimming and was twice a state qualifier. Megan serves as secretary for her school’s National Honor Society; Interact Club and Student Council and is a member of the Future Business Leaders of America. Megan will be attending Liberty University in the fall to study journalism.

ANDREW MULLINS COURAGEOUS ACHIEVEMENT: Ali Jones, Washington & Lee High School

“When I was 16, my world turned upside down. I had never once crossed my mind that I could be diagnosed with cancer...Waking up every day became easier once I realized I didn’t have to face the day alone,” wrote Ali in her achievement award application essay. For Ali, it meant continued involvement in VHSL activities and athletics while facing the debilitating negative side effects of 11 months of chemotherapy after being diagnosed with Melanoma in May, 2010.

According to Malcolm Lewis, Washington & Lee activities director, “Seeing her on the volleyball court this past fall was an inspiration to us all. Many teachers have commented on how our school...is more compassionate and empathetic. I can’t help but think that what Ali went through has had a ‘maturing’ effect on our entire student body...proof that Ali and her struggle will continue to have a lasting effect on our school community. She is an inspiration to the entire county.”

Ali earned two varsity letters in volleyball and captained the team as senior after missing her entire junior year due to her chemotherapy. She returned to play as a senior with the use of a compression sleeve on her right arm to prevent swelling from her lack of lymph nodes. Ali has maintained a 4.37 GPA and was named to the District all-Academic team following her sophomore and senior seasons. In addition, she is a staff member and sales coordinator for her high school year book.

Ali’s scholastic and extracurricular activities are impressive. She is a member of the National Honor Society; attended the Chesapeake Bay Governor’s School and charter member and president of the Ecology Club. Her volunteer activities include President of the W&L Ruriteens; Relay for Life fundraiser and speaker; donating her hair during chemotherapy to the Locks of Love when her hair began to fall out due to chemo; organizing a school-wide campaign to collect gift bags for Local Domestic Violence Shelter; organizing fundraisers to benefit the Ronald McDonald House and volunteering for various related projects with her Menokin Baptist Youth Group.

Ali will attend either Christopher Newport University in the fall to study mathematics.

ABOUT THE ALLSTATE FOUNDATION / VHSL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Allstate Foundation / 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 313 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 The Allstate Foundation

Established in 1952, The Allstate Foundation is an independent, charitable organization made possible by subsidiaries of The Allstate Corporation (NYSE: ALL). Through partnerships with nonprofit organizations across the country, The Allstate Foundation brings the relationships, reputation and resources of Allstate to support innovative and lasting solutions that enhance people's well-being and prosperity. With a focus on teen safe driving and building financial independence for domestic violence survivors, The Allstate Foundation also promotes safe and vital communities; tolerance, inclusion, and diversity; and economic empowerment. Over the last 60 years, the Foundation has contributed nearly \$300 million to organizations and projects in communities throughout the nation. For more information, visit www.allstatefoundation.org.

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