

# VIRGINIA HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

1642 State Farm Blvd., Charlottesville, VA 22911

PH: 434-977-8475 Fax: 434-977-5943

[www.vhsl.org](http://www.vhsl.org)

May 3, 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## FARM BUREAU INSURANCE-VHSL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

RICHMOND, VA—A total of 39 high school seniors from across Virginia have won state or regional honors in the 2004 Farm Bureau Insurance-VHSL Achievement Award program to recognize outstanding achievement in athletic and/or academic activities.

A selection committee of educators, media members and Farm Bureau Insurance representatives selected 10 state winners of \$1,000 scholarships from 39 regional finalists. The Farm Bureau Insurance – VHSL Achievement Awards are the Virginia High School League's premier program for recognition of individual students involved in athletic and academic activities.

Following the profile of each state winner is a list of regional finalists for that award.

### **Group A - Male Athlete: William Holaday, Mathews High School, Mathews**

Will has won 11 athletic letters, four in football, four in wrestling and three in soccer. He won first-team All-District and All-Region and second-team All-State honors in football and was MVP in the Region A football championship game for two consecutive years. In 2003, Will won the Group A state wrestling championship at 189 pounds and second-team All-Region honors as goalkeeper in soccer. He is also involved in band, Beta Club and Ski Club and serves his community as student representative on the Mathews Parks and Recreation Board, as a volunteer youth soccer referee, youth wrestling coach and in the Scholastic Read program. He plans to attend Christopher Newport University.

Region A William (Will) Holaday, Mathews High School, Mathews

Region B Colin Powell, Nelson County High School, Lovingston

Region C Will Campbell, Northwood High School, Saltville

Region D William (Cody) Crowder, John I. Burton High School, Norton

### **Group A - Female Athlete: Kendra Potter, John I. Burton High School, Norton**

Kendra has won 15 athletic letters, four each in basketball, volleyball and track and three in cross country. Captain of both the basketball and volleyball team, she won district and region recognition in both sports and was a state qualifier in distance track events three times and in cross country twice. She is active in marching and concert band, Key Club, Future Business Leaders of America, Sign Language Club, Spanish Club, Beta Club and drama. Kendra volunteers for the Salvation Army and for senior citizens, and because her parents are deaf has taken a special interest in working with deaf children as a Certified Interpreter for Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She plans to attend Emory & Henry College.

Region A Rachel Previs, King William High School, King William

Region B Jessica Showman, Stonewall Jackson, Quicksburg

Region C Katherine (Kate) Suehs, Pocahontas High School, Pocahontas

Region D Kendra Potter, John I. Burton High School, Norton

### **Group A - Academic Activities: Lillian Smith, Middlesex High School, Saluda**

Lily is a multiple threat in academic activities: writing for the student newspaper for three years and serving as opinion editor for two, getting published in the literary magazine for four years and serving as editor in chief as a senior, winning second place in state creative writing for poetry, playing on scholastic bowl teams that finished second and third in the state and as a senior serving as captain. Three times she finished among the Top 12 at state cross country and she has run track for two years. She swims for the community team. Lily completed a 40-hour project for a new Maritime Museum and traveled to Honduras as a translator to administer medical aid. She plans to attend Columbia University or University of Virginia.

Region A Lillian (Lily) Smith, Middlesex High School, Saluda

Region B Craig Orndorff, Central High School, Woodstock

Region C Bent-Lee Carr, Eastern Montgomery High School, Elliston

Region D LeRae Edwards, Haysi High School, Haysi

**Group AA - Male Athlete: Nathan Belcher, Graham High School, Bluefield**

Nathan has earned 13 letters, four each in basketball and soccer, three in football and one each in cross country and golf. He won district and region honors in football and basketball and All-State recognition in soccer. As a junior, Nathan helped his basketball team to the state semifinals, and when the starter was injured days before the start of his senior football season, Nathan took over as quarterback and led the team to the state semifinals. He also represents the school in scholastic bowl. Nathan is a member of Beta Club, Student Council Association, Commonwealth Alliance for Drug Resistance Education and Future Business Leaders of America. He plans to attend the College of William and Mary.

Region I	Sean Lindsay, New Kent High School, New Kent
Region II	Bryan Lescanec, Western Albemarle High School, Crozet
Region III	Jeff Highfill, William Byrd High School, Vinton
Region IV	Nathan Belcher, Graham High School, Bluefield

**Group AA - Female Athlete: Julia Schwartz, Charlottesville High School, Charlottesville**

Julia has won 13 letters: four each in soccer, cross country and indoor track and one in outdoor track. A Wendy's High School Heisman State Finalist, she won All-State recognition as a distance runner and as dominant midfielder led her soccer team to a 10-1-1 record and regional playoffs for the first time in four years. She is president of French Club, concertmaster of orchestra and a member of Student Council Association and National Honor Society. Julia tutors middle school students and volunteers at a summer camp for disabled children. An All-State violinist, she teaches the instrument and performs with the Avalon String Quartet. She plans to attend Princeton.

Region I	Courtney Simon, Poquoson High School, Poquoson
Region II	Julia Schwartz, Charlottesville High School, Charlottesville
Region III	Megan Forbes, Lord Botetourt High School, Daleville
Region IV	Carlie Overfelt, Carroll County High School, Hillsville

**Group AA - Academic Activities: Blaine Morriss, Robert E. Lee High School, Staunton**

Captain of the school's scholastic bowl team, Blaine helped win state championships in 2002 and 2004. He has also won four athletic letters: two each in tennis and soccer. He won first place in the Virginia Junior Academy of Science competition for work on Visual Display Terminals' effects on sight and was a Siemens-Westinghouse semifinalist for work concerning the Quark-Gluon Plasma. He plays violin with the community orchestra and is an accomplished skier and snowboarder. He referees youth soccer and has done volunteer work in Costa Rica. He plans to attend Dartmouth College.

Region I	John Grothaus, Poquoson High School, Poquoson
Region II	Blaine Morriss, Robert E. Lee High School, Staunton
Region III	Kira Gottberg, Brookville High School, Lynchburg
Region IV	Therese (Tess) Sell, Graham High School, Bluefield

**Group AAA - Male Athlete: Derry Steer, West Springfield High School, Springfield**

Derry is captain of the team that scored the most points in state cheer since competition began and won the 2003-04 state championship. He has won four letters in cheer and two in swimming and is a National Junior Olympic power tumbler ranked third nationally at level 8 and seventh nationally at level 10. His Cheer Dynasty All-Star Cheer squad is American Masters National Co-ed Champion and he won the American Masters Solo Male Cheer Championship. Derry has participated in theatre, appearing in two school musicals. He is a member of the National Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, Student Government, Symphonic Band, YADAPP anti-drug club and Bibliophiles Club. He plans to attend Clemson University.

Central	Luke Goodwin, Henrico High School, Richmond
Eastern	Carl Price, Princess Anne High School, Virginia Beach
Northern	Derry Steer, West Springfield High School, Springfield
Northwest	Walter Williams, Stonewall Jackson High School, Manassas

**Group AAA - Female Athlete: Jamie Miller, J.R. Tucker High School, Richmond**

Jamie has won eight letters: four in softball, three in volleyball and one in tennis. She has been named All-District pitcher in softball for two consecutive seasons. In her first year of tennis this fall, she played No. 4 singles and No. 1 doubles while playing volleyball in the same season. She is a member of Mu Alpha Theta, National Honor Society, Beta Club, National Spanish Honor Society, Class Council, Key Links, Spanish Club and SADD. She plays travel softball for the West End Waves, assists with field day at a local elementary school, represents SODA in teaching a sixth grade class and visits area nursing homes. She plans to attend the University of Virginia.

Central	Jamie Miller, J.R. Tucker High School, Richmond
Eastern	Kathleen Brasington, Frank W. Cox High School, Virginia Beach
Northern	Thuy-Van (Tina) Ho, Thomas Jefferson High School-Science and Technology, Alexandria
Northwest	Tanya Otsuka, Potomac Senior High School, Dumfries

**Group AAA - Academic Activities: Eric Eteuati, Great Bridge High School, Chesapeake**

Eric has participated in drama and forensics for four years, appearing in a cutting of "Prometheus Bound" that finished second at state and winning two state forensics championships and a runner-up award in storytelling. The Virginia Theatre Association has honored him with a playwright award. He has earned two letters in volleyball. Eric is a member of National Honor Society, National Forensics League, National French Honor Society, Senior Class chaplain and the Great Bridge Theatre Company. He performed in the Little Theatre of Norfolk's production of "A Lion in Winter" and volunteers at Chesapeake General Hospital. He plans to attend Emory & Henry College.

Central	Marissa Wilson, Lloyd C. Bird High School, Chesterfield
Eastern	Eric Eteuati, Great Bridge High School, Chesapeake
Northern	Junaid Shams, Annandale High School, Annandale
Northwest	Charlotte Sibley, Halifax County High School, South Boston

**Andrew Mullins Courageous Achievement Award: Tabitha Owens, Haysi High School, Haysi**

Suffering from scoliosis that required her to wear a brace 23 hours a day for three years to keep her spine in alignment, Tabitha found an outlet in speaking and writing, winning district, region and state medals in VHSL original oratory and sharing her experience as part of the school's third-in-the-state creative writing folder. She has lettered in track for four years and once in basketball. Tabitha is a member of Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Beta Club, Key Club, Future Business Leaders of America and Student Council Association. She volunteers with Special Olympics and Read Across America Day. She plans to attend the University of Virginia's College at Wise.

Suzana (Suzi) Maricic, Charlottesville High School, Charlottesville
Tabitha Owens, Haysi High School, Haysi
David Techman, Western Albemarle High School, Crozet

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 for courageous achievement in overcoming exceptional circumstances to find success in VHSL activities. This year, a record total of 461 students were nominated by 196 public high schools. That is a 50 percent increase over the 300 students nominated in 2003.

Students must have earned a minimum 3.00 grade point average and have made significant contributions to VHSL activities. The 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 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.

Many nominees are also heavily involved in other activities and volunteer work in the school and in the community. A completed application includes a student essay, letters of recommendation from two people who know the student's work well and endorsement by the school principal.

The VHSL is an outgrowth of the Washington and Jefferson Societies at the University of Virginia, and today includes 301 accredited public schools. More than 130,000 students participate each year in VHSL athletic programs, and an additional 20,000 students take part in VHSL academic programs.

Virginia Farm Bureau Insurance Services is committed to providing products that best meet the insurance needs of Virginia's families and small businesses. A membership organization with more than 132,000 members, Virginia Farm Bureau also offers a wide range of financial planning products and services.