



St. Louis Sports Commission Associates' Sportsmanship Scholarship Past Recipients

LUKE SCHLUETER - 2012

A four-time state championship qualifier, Luke Schlueter captained the Parkway West varsity swim team during his senior year. He was admired and viewed as a role model by his teammates and coaches – and his opponents. Parkway West coach Allison Zeller said there were multiple meets where other teams would be chanting, “Schlueter, Schlueter!” She said when she asked another coach why they were chanting his name, the response was that his competitors really like Luke and respect him as a swimmer and person. Luke always socialized with other swimmers. After every race, he would humbly shake hands with his opponents before exiting the pool. As a senior, he placed third in the 100-Fly at the state meet and broke a long-standing school record. True to his character, he immediately turned to his competitors to congratulate them on their accomplishments before he left the pool to accept his medal. Luke’s selflessness has long been evident. At age 13, as a member of the Creve Coeur Racquet Club swim team, he was due to receive the squad’s high point trophy. On the night of the team’s awards banquet, he privately asked his coach to award the trophy to the swimmer with the next highest point total since he had been the recipient the previous year. Luke never told anyone except his parents about the conversation, and no one clapped louder for the swimmer who accepted the trophy. Luke continued his education at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



ZACHARY BOATMAN - 2012

Zachary Boatman played four years for the St. Louis University High School volleyball program. Those at SLUH say he is a shining example of sportsmanship: He is an honest competitor, selfless teammate and a gracious individual. His coach, James Gioia, noted that Zach would help the officials with calls that pertained to plays he made. Gioia said, “It is evident from watching Zach that he never seeks to gain an edge in any dishonest or unsportsmanlike way. He competes purely and honestly.” Gioia added that Zach was gracious in both victory and defeat. He celebrated with teammates and not in the face of his opponents. When SLUH lost, Zach genuinely congratulated his opponents and displayed tremendous respect. A defining example occurred in the state volleyball championship. SLUH lost a hard-fought match to Francis Howell Central. After receiving their medals, Zach implored his teammates to stay on the court at the net and applaud each Francis Howell athlete during the medal ceremony. The following week, SLUH’s athletic director received a note from Francis Howell stating that the school’s fans, coaches and players appreciated the act of sportsmanship and felt Zach’s actions were first class. Zachary continued his education at the University of Arkansas.



NATALIE WILLIAMS - 2012

A multi-sport athlete at Parkway South (basketball, cross country and soccer) – not to mention newspaper sports editor – Natalie is a fierce competitor. But throughout high school, she learned that respecting others, including her rivals, was more rewarding than winning a game. During her senior year, the Parkway South girls basketball team was set to play rival Lafayette in a game that would determine the conference title. The game was scheduled for 7 p.m., but Lafayette mistakenly thought tipoff was at 5:30 p.m. Natalie discovered the error and left the pregame shoot-around to try to help the Lafayette players so they wouldn’t sit around for three hours. Parkway South coach Thomas Williams said, “Natalie wanted nothing more than to win that game, but she wanted to win the right way.” As a member of Parkway South’s varsity cross country team, she selflessly filled a spot until younger runners were ready to step up at the end of the season. Coach Sandra Guymon said, “Not only did Natalie never question this role, she set an excellent example for the freshmen and sophomores.” In her nomination essay, Natalie recounted a story of how she became friends with a Lafayette cross country runner she was “supposed” to dislike. During her sophomore year, Natalie engaged her opponent in conversation at an awards ceremony. Finding the competitor to be a nice person, Natalie realized the schools’ rivalry shouldn’t get in the way. From that point forward, they cheered each other on and helped one another get through every race. The camaraderie she instilled among her teammates, opponents and herself underscored her remarkable maturity. Thomas Williams, the Parkway South basketball coach, said, “Natalie has set the standard for what all future Lady Patriots will be measured by on the court and in the classroom.” Natalie continued her education at Stephens College.



KATIE KENNEDY - 2011

A graduate of Lindbergh High School, Katie Kennedy was a member of the school's track and field team and captain of the varsity cheerleading squad. During her senior year, she broke Lindbergh's pole vault record. But as proud as she is of that accomplishment, she says she takes even more pride in the kindness, integrity and class she exhibited in competition. That approach made her one of the most popular pole vaulters in the area. According to one of her coaches, Katie was always one of the first to congratulate anyone who beat her and was the first to console anyone who finished behind her. The coach described how at the Kansas Relays Katie sat next to and comforted a competitor from Oklahoma who was distraught after missing her opening jump. Later, after Katie was eliminated from the competition, she helped calm a vaulter from Fort Zumwalt High School whose coach could not attend. At the State qualifying meet, Katie noticed a top rival vaulter was about to be in violation of a uniform infraction. She informed the competitor of the mistake, saving her from disqualification. Katie recognized the importance of sportsmanship on the sidelines as well. She said as a cheerleader she observed unsportsmanlike behavior. "It saddened me to see not only athletes behaving badly, but parents as well. I tried to use those times to point out to the younger cheerleaders that our job was to bring the schools together." Katie continued her education at Maryville University.



JASON GRANT - 2011

A first-team All-State selection, Jason Grant was the captain of the Vianney varsity soccer team. According to his coaches, there were multiple times when referees would tell them how much they respected Jason and how well he carried himself on the field. In fact, the coaching staff received a letter from the Missouri State High School Activities Association indicating that a referee had written to the organization to acknowledge Jason's professionalism, leadership and sportsmanship qualities. His respect for the game and the referees was contagious. His positive attitude made the players around him better. In his scholarship nomination essay, Jason wrote: "Although winning is very important, the way that you win is even more important. I was always taught by my parents and coaches to hold my head up after a loss, and to properly respect my opponent after a win." Jason continued his education at Western Michigan University.



ZASMINE JOHNSON - 2011

Zasmine Johnson played volleyball, basketball and soccer at Hazelwood Central. Michael Loyd, who coached Zasmine's club volleyball team as well as the varsity team at Fort Zumwalt East, said, "There isn't a more selfless and classy athlete than her... Before every match, she would go tell the opposing coach good luck. At the end of every match she would make sure to thank the opposing coach, the refs and the players. If we would lose, she would always wish the winning team best of luck on the rest of the day. Several coaches would come up to me to talk about her attitude on the court and how lucky I was." As an all-conference honorable mention selection in soccer, Zasmine played goalie even though she wasn't comfortable with the position. The team needed her and she did it for the team, according to Hazelwood Central coach Patrick Rocco. He added that her teammates nicknamed her "Grandma" because of her compassion and the way she treated them was as if she was watching over them like a grandma would. Rocco said, "In my seven years of coaching, I have coached and encountered hundreds of student-athletes. I know of no other athlete that I have coached or observed that is more deserving (of the scholarship) than Zasmine." Zasmine continued her education at the University of Missouri.



JIMMY MYERS - 2010

Jimmy Myers graduated from Westminster Christian Academy where he was a four-year letterman on the varsity tennis team and served as captain during his junior and senior seasons. His coach, Nathan Talley, said that not only did Jimmy play No. 1 for the Westminster team and play amazing tennis all season, “he did so with an attitude of grace, humility and kindness.” It was not unusual for Jimmy to defeat an opponent soundly yet walk off the court with him, asking a question about the player’s school or sharing a laugh. During his senior season, Jimmy encouraged his teammates to go beyond the traditional handshake at the end of each match. He urged them to make eye contact and give a sincere compliment as well. In the heat of competition, Jimmy demonstrated great self-control and poise. Talley watched one match in which Jimmy’s opponent made several bad line calls. But Jimmy did not let it bother him. Instead, he regrouped, gave his opponent the benefit of the doubt, and kept playing with passion and focus. In another match, Talley observed Jimmy defeating a very capable opponent with ease. On the changeover, he watched Jimmy playfully joking around with his opponent, both of them laughing, enjoying the sport and each other’s company. The coach said, “As I watched that, I actually got teary because that’s so much of what it’s about: enjoying the sport and the people you meet because of the sport. Having fun with people and never at others’ expense. Most high school kids don’t understand or demonstrate this – and I can’t imagine any of them showing it better than Jimmy Myers.” Jimmy continued his education at Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Ga.



MEGAN WOOD - 2010

A graduate of Washington High School, Megan Wood was a member of the school’s varsity cross country, basketball, soccer, and track and field teams. She earned numerous academic and athletic honors – yet her scholarship recommendations emphasized that sportsmanship is one of Megan’s greatest strengths. That quality was highlighted during her senior year in a cross country race. As Megan passed a competitor in the final half-mile, she told the athlete to run with her, push on and “you can do it.” The competing runner finished ahead of Megan, yet Megan celebrated her achievement, congratulating her on a terrific race. The competitor’s father witnessed the exchange and was so moved that he wrote a letter to Washington’s athletic director praising Megan. In her scholarship essay, Megan wrote: “Being an athlete is the easy part of any sport but having good sportsmanship takes heart and a strong character. I commend those who have the audacity to encourage an opponent, because they do it out of the kindness in their heart, never for glory. In my book, sports are played not for winning – that only lasts a second; but for playing fair, having fun, and giving back, because a kind, encouraging word or deed can make all the difference in living life to its fullest.” Megan continued her education at the University of Arkansas.



TRENT ROSS - 2009

Trent Ross of Troy, Ill., was the recipient of the inaugural St. Louis Sports Commission Associates’ Sportsmanship Scholarship. Trent was an outstanding student-athlete during his four years at Triad High School. He captained the varsity track and field and cross country teams, and also played on the junior varsity soccer team. Perhaps his most remarkable attribute was the attitude he had toward opponents. At the end of every race, Trent thanked and congratulated each of his fellow competitors no matter where he finished. It takes tremendous character to congratulate someone who just beat you. Moreover, it requires a humble spirit to encourage those who finish after you without being condescending. Races can also be exhausting. Trent helped those runners off the ground and allowed them to lean on him until they caught their breath. His commitment to sportsmanship did not end on the track. Trent used social media to keep in contact with his fellow competitors. They encouraged and congratulated each other via e-mail and Facebook. Triad cross country coach Andy Brendel said, “In my seven years of coaching high school sports, I have yet to see an athlete display such a high level of sportsmanship.” Brian Weiss, the school’s track and field coach, said Trent “displays a unique combination of exceptional natural talent, superior motivation, character beyond reproach, and a dynamic spirit, all of which elevate him, in my mind, into the top one percent of athletes and students that I have had the opportunity of teaching and coaching.” To all that, Trent replied that while he was honored to be nominated by his coaches, he doesn’t think he did anything special. “To me, doing what I do for other competitors at races is just how I was raised and that is not anything out of the ordinary.” Trent continued his education at Western Illinois University.

