



THE CARL FRICKS SPORTSMANSHIP SCHOLARSHIP

PRESENTED BY THE SPORTS COMMISSION ASSOCIATES

PAST RECIPIENTS | 2009 - 2015



MARISSA VOELKER - 2015

PARKWAY NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

The Sports Commission Associates awarded Marissa Voelker their top Sportsmanship Scholarship honor for 2015. The Parkway North graduate and multi-sport varsity athlete in swimming, diving and softball received \$5,000 to begin her collegiate education. Marissa's efforts as a first team all-district softball player helped lead Parkway North to a district championship in 2015. However, it was Marissa's actions as a diver that earned her this year's top award. During a diving meet earlier in the season, Marissa placed second with a personal best score. Marissa was simultaneously confused and elated. On one hand, she had posted her best performance ever. On the other, she thought there was a competitor who may have done better than she did. When the awards ceremony ended, Marissa looked at her score sheet and noticed an error in the calculation. She had not placed second after all, but she was the only one who knew. Marissa found the athlete who had rightfully placed second, explained the situation to the young lady and her coach, and then promptly handed over the medal. Marissa's act of sportsmanship not only negated a lifetime-best performance, but it took away valuable team points. Instead of disappointment, Marissa's coach, Natalie Vonarx, expressed great pride in what her diver had done. "Marissa's ability to see something that was wrong with her dive sheet and take action on her own illustrates her integrity and selflessness." Marissa will continue her education at the University of Missouri.



FATIMA SEHIC - 2015

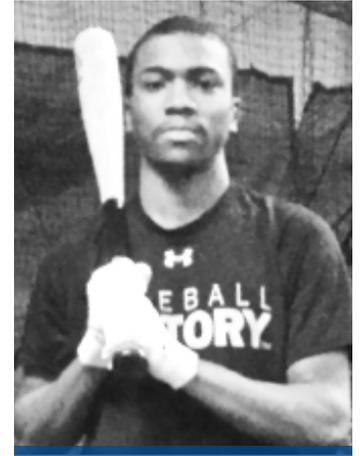
HANCOCK PLACE HIGH SCHOOL

Fatima Sehic competed in varsity softball and basketball at Hancock Place High School and served as the basketball team's captain her senior year. Opponents are not enemies and Fatima made that point clear each time she stepped onto the field or court. She gained a reputation for being the athlete who would welcome the opposing team and thank officials postgame. During a lengthy rain delay in a softball game against rival Bayless High, Fatima took it upon herself to visit the opposing bench and break the ice. Hancock Place softball coach Nicole Herman said, "Within minutes, the entire benches of both teams were in the outfield laughing, dancing, telling stories, etc. For 15 minutes, they were no longer rivals. There was no hatred or competition. Thanks to Fatima, they were just 25 softball players." On another occasion – this time on the basketball court – Fatima discovered there were athletes on the opposing team who did not have any water. Having brought extra water bottles from home for the game, she shared them with her opponents in hopes that "it would ease the game for them." It is this type of positive attitude and concern for others that made Fatima a 2015 Sportsmanship Scholarship honoree. She will continue her education at the University of Missouri.

QUENTIN PHILLIPS - 2015

CARDINAL RITTER COLLEGE PREP HIGH SCHOOL

Quentin Phillips was a four-year varsity baseball player and senior team captain at Cardinal Ritter College Prep High School. Quentin's selection as a 2015 Sportsmanship Scholarship honoree comes on the strength of an incident retold by his AAU summer league coach, former Cardinal Curt Ford. During a game in the fall of 2013, Quentin was at third base after hitting a triple. In the next at-bat, he saw an opportunity to reach home plate. A close play at the plate resulted in a collision that injured the catcher. Quentin immediately helped the player to his feet and gave him water as first aid help arrived. He apologized to the young man and his parents before leaving the park. Quentin's passion for the game of baseball is only eclipsed by his compassion for others. Quentin will continue his education at Louisiana State University.



LAUREN DISPER - 2015

MARQUETTE HIGH SCHOOL

Lauren Disper was a varsity softball player at Marquette High School. She led an effort her sophomore year to raise money for a former teammate who had been diagnosed with cancer. Lauren's coach, Lizy Indelicato, called Lauren's actions the most selfless thing she has seen in her four years of coaching and eight years of playing. Indelicato said, "Even though Lauren had not spoken with her since she left the team, she took time to visit her (at the hospital) and play games to help pass the time (during radiation and chemo treatments)." When a helmet decal was created in the young lady's honor, Lauren purchased enough for her teammates to wear and encouraged their sale to other St. Louis area teams. During Lauren's senior year, when a young lady from Eureka tragically passed away in a car accident, Lauren orchestrated a moment of silence at home plate with Eureka's seniors that included a presentation of Eureka's colors in a unique bouquet of purple and white flowers. As a softball player, Lauren is a frequent traveler, but it is her care for others that will take her the furthest and the reason why she is a 2015 Sportsmanship Scholarship honoree. Lauren will continue her education at the University of Arkansas.

ERIN BIRSCHBACH - 2014

FOX HIGH SCHOOL

The Sports Commission Associates selected Erin Birschbach to receive its top \$5,000 Sportsmanship Scholarship award for 2014. A three-year captain of the Fox High School varsity girls' basketball team, Erin led the school to its first district championship in 23 years and finished her high school career with the third most points in Fox history. The class and character she exhibited on the court surpassed her statistical accomplishments. Erin was lauded for the respect she had for officials and the camaraderie she shared with opponents. One game in particular exemplified her selflessness and compassion. In February, Fox played at rival Windsor High School on senior night. A week earlier, Windsor's top player suffered an ACL injury that ended her senior season. Erin wanted to help brighten the opponent's spirits, understanding how devastated the four-year starter and captain was to miss her final home game. So Erin and her coach devised a plan to allow the injured player to be on the court for the start of the game and score an uncontested basket. Erin was the one who "lost" the opening tip. She said seeing her injured competitor catch a pass from a teammate and make the shot was "an amazing moment." In his recommendation letter for the scholarship, Erin's coach, Jeremy Donald, mentioned that his seven-year-old son often gets to watch Fox's practices and games. Coach Donald said, "I can teach him the skills and talk to him about what is right and wrong. However, having the opportunity to watch a girl like Erin Birschbach is the most in-depth lesson he'll ever receive in what true sportsmanship is all about." Erin is continuing her education at Jefferson College.





KAYLA HEZEL - 2014

MEHLVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Kayla Hezel competed in multiple sports at Mehlville High School and served as captain of the varsity softball and soccer teams. Her on-field compassion and civility stood out throughout her high school career. She was praised for offering her hand to fallen players, going out of her way to congratulate opponents even after difficult losses, and consistently thanking referees for their hard work and professionalism. Kayla said in her mind, sportsmanship is the most important aspect of the game. Among her actions that back that up was an incident that occurred when Mehlville played Cor Jesu Academy in softball. The Cor Jesu team was running late for the game and upon arriving at Mehlville, had to hurry down a steep hill to get to the field. A player carrying the squad's water jug tripped, busting the jug open and sending it down the hill. As the Cor Jesu players stood in disbelief, Kayla told them not to worry and encouraged them to start warming up. Kayla and a teammate then picked up the jug, filled it with water and ice, brought it to the Cor Jesu dugout, and wished her opponents good luck. Mehlville soccer coach Thomas Harper said, "Kayla understands that competition helps shape character and develop attitudes and values that will last a lifetime." Kayla is continuing her education at the University of Missouri.

KENNY PLEIMANN - 2014

ST. JOHN VIANNEY HIGH SCHOOL

Kenny Pleimann served as a student assistant for the football, basketball and baseball programs at St. John Vianney High School. He is the first student manager to receive the Sportsmanship Scholarship – a tribute to the extraordinary sportsmanship he displayed in the role. Although he never ran for a touchdown, made a basket or scored a run, he stood out among athletes at Vianney for his class, integrity and unselfishness.

Kenny had an amazing rapport with officials and opposing teams. His favorite thing as manager was walking the line with his team after every game to shake opponents' hands and tell them they played a good game. Multiple opposing coaches and players commented to their counterparts at Vianney about Kenny's positive attitude toward the opposition, even when Kenny's teams were on the losing side. Perhaps the most powerful testament to Kenny's sportsmanship is offered by Vianney basketball coach Kevin Walsh, whose young son serves as the team's water boy. Coach Walsh recounted how after games his son would tell him about the sportsmanship lessons Kenny taught him at the end of the bench. Kenny would explain to him that he can't act poorly when a referee makes a call against Vianney because it reflects badly on the team.

He would remind the boy that cheering when an opponent missed a shot or booing when one was made was not the right way to act. Coach Walsh said, "As a coach, I am so proud of Kenny for understanding the importance of sportsmanship. More importantly, as a parent, I am thankful that Kenny was the person sitting next to my son and educating him on why it is so important to have good sportsmanship." Kenny is continuing his education at McKendree University.



BRIANNE EBENROTH - 2013

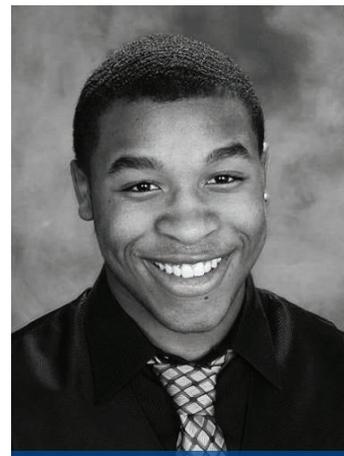
ST. DOMINIC HIGH SCHOOL

Brianne Ebenroth is a multi-sport athlete who participated in cross country, basketball and soccer during her four years at St. Dominic High School. Although she competed in several sports, it was soccer she excelled in. Brianne garnered multiple all-St. Louis, all-conference and all-state honors. She earned a full athletic and academic scholarship to Drury University. But prior to her senior season, Brianne was diagnosed with Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS), which causes chronic fatigue and other symptoms. Because of the condition, she was no longer able to play at the high level she expected of herself. Faced with this reality, she opted to return the scholarship so that Drury could use the funds for another deserving player. It was a tremendously classy, selfless and mature decision. Even with the medical condition, Brianne made the most of her senior season at St. Dominic. With Brianne as its captain, the school's soccer team won its second consecutive state title. In the championship game, with three minutes to go and St. Dominic up 2-0, Brianne asked her coach to substitute her for any teammates who had not yet played. St. Dominic Director of Athletics Jim Welby said, "Despite being her last competitive soccer game ever, Bri even wanted to take herself out so her teammates could have the memory forever. She had the foresight, compassion and sportsmanship to think past the moment and think about her teammates in the biggest game and moment of the year." Brianne is continuing her education at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

SHERMAN CALHOUN - 2013

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

Sherman Calhoun competed in track and field as a sophomore, but the gridiron was his true home in four years at Christian Brothers College (CBC) High School. Sherman is the embodiment of the saying, “Tough times don’t build character, they reveal it.” During his senior year, CBC lost to rival DeSmet in the district playoffs, bringing the Cadets’ season to an abrupt end. Sherman described the contest as “the hardest game” he’s ever played. After the game, a heartbroken Sherman did something practically unheard of in football. He walked over to the DeSmet sideline and congratulated each of the players and coaches and wished them luck in the next round. It’s common for teams to meet at midfield for the obligatory handshake after a game. But Sherman went a step further, showing tremendous class and respect for his opponent. It was a remarkable display of sportsmanship. Sherman’s loyalty and character extended beyond this game and throughout his high school sports career. One of his coaches noted that Sherman is respected by his peers because he gives them respect. The coach called Sherman one of his favorite players because of his contagious smile and tremendous spirit. Sherman is continuing his education at Lincoln University.



BLAKE DRYER - 2013

ROCKWOOD SUMMIT HIGH SCHOOL

Blake Dryer competed in baseball, basketball and track and field while at Rockwood Summit High School. Blake’s basketball coach described him as “soft-spoken, respectful, hard-working, and highly coachable.” This stellar attitude was challenged during a varsity basketball tournament when the level of physical play became intense. An opposing player elbowed Blake under his eye causing an injury that required stitches. Later in the game, the player who injured Blake found himself on the floor after a hard foul by one of Blake’s teammates. Showing great class, Blake, with butterfly tape over his eye, reached down to help his fallen opponent up. Officials complimented Blake on the selfless act. It’s no surprise that Blake was recognized with the Outstanding Sportsmanship Award from the Missouri State High School Activities Association. In his junior year, Blake persevered during a challenging time as his father fought through a devastating Lymphoma diagnosis. On the court, he kept his emotions in check, never allowing the adversity of the situation to affect his interactions with teammates, opponents or officials. Although Blake is not competing at the collegiate level, he said he does plan to participate in intramurals and intends to continue to set an example of sportsmanship for others to follow. Blake is continuing his education at Rockhurst University.

KATIE RINGHAUSEN - 2013

FRANCIS HOWELL HIGH SCHOOL

Katie Ringhausen participated in track and field as a freshman, but her love of golf catapulted her to new heights during her four years at Francis Howell High School. She played in two state championships and was the No. 2 ranked player on the team her senior year. The only thing consistently better than Katie’s scores was her character. Katie penalized herself for the smallest of infractions – even those unbeknownst to her competitors. She always used her counting device to keep an accurate number of strokes during play. Katie displayed great sportsmanship in a particular match when her competitor ran out of golf balls, which would result in the player’s disqualification. Rather than take the easy win, Katie gave the opponent a sleeve of her own golf balls which allowed her to finish the round. Katie has been recognized multiple times for outstanding sportsmanship on the state and conference levels. She is continuing her education at the University of Central Missouri.





LUKE SCHLUETER - 2012

PARKWAY WEST HIGH SCHOOL

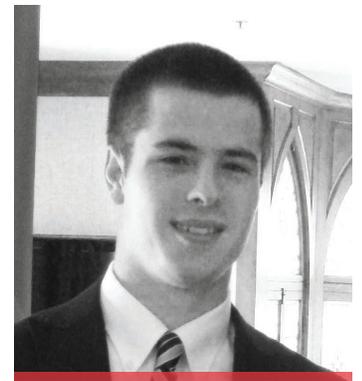
A four-time state championship qualifier, Luke Schlueter captained the Parkway West varsity swim team during his senior year. He was admired and viewed as a role model by his teammates and coaches – and his opponents. Parkway West coach Allison Zeller said there were multiple meets where other teams 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

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL

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

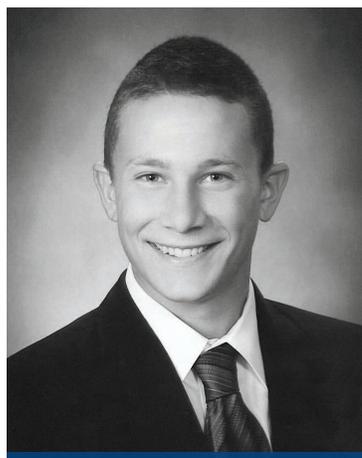
PARKWAY SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL

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

LINDBERGH HIGH SCHOOL

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

ST. JOHN VIANNEY HIGH SCHOOL

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

HAZELWOOD CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

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 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

WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

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

WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

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

TRIAD HIGH SCHOOL

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.