



MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

34th Annual
ACADEMICS, ARTS & ATHLETICS



AWARD CELEBRATION

March 26, 2022

Loews Hotel, Minneapolis

*Excellence is the result of caring
more than others think is wise—*

*Risking more than others
think is safe—*

*Dreaming more than others
think is practical—*

*Expecting more than others
think is possible.*

Welcome to the **Academics, Arts & Athletics Award Celebration**



Tom Jerome, President
MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Welcome to the Minnesota State High School League Academics, Arts and Athletics Award Banquet. Since the inception of the Triple 'A' award in 1988, the Minnesota State High School League has recognized nearly 16,000 students who have represented their school as AAA award winners. Today we gather to celebrate and honor the 32 students selected as Triple "A" award winners from across the State of Minnesota.

Each student honored at today's banquet has been forged and molded into AAA award winners through hard work, dedication and a commitment to excellence within the hallways, gymnasiums, theaters, rinks and playing fields of their schools and communities which they represent. The education based lifelong skills these students have learned and continue to develop have allowed each to shine brightly in the areas of Academics, Arts and Athletics.

The talented group before us today is the result of a broad-based selection process, with one girl and one boy put forward by high schools across the state of Minnesota eventually being refined and narrowed down to one girl and one boy selected to represent Class A and Class AA schools in the state's eight regions.

Today's AAA award banquet should not be viewed merely as a celebration or a moment of recognition for each student.... rather we should view this banquet as a spring board into the future for the ongoing pursuit of excellence, high character and continued service to others.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Minnesota State High School League, I wish to pledge to each of you the Minnesota State High School League's continuing commitment to academics, the arts and athletic achievement within our member schools.

Thank you for joining us as we pay tribute to these exceptional young people and honor their achievements.

Program

Welcome

Lisa Lissimore

Associate Director, MSHSL

Comments

Tom Jerome

Board of Directors President, MSHSL

Justin Baylor

McDonald's Owner/Operators

Introduction of Triple “A” Achievers

Sandra Setter Larsen

Activities Director, Eagan High School

Dan Johnson

Activities Director, Hopkins High School



Carson Ruen

Lanesboro High School Region 1A

G.P.A. 3.99

Band, choir, football, cross country, basketball, track and field.

"The process of learning a musical number, training for a 5k, or studying for a calculus test can be grueling. But the process creates joy. Where would joy come from if not from realizing a goal?"

College plans: To study agricultural business management.



Rachel Nesseth

Kenyon-Wanamingo High School Region 1A

G.P.A. 4.3

Band, choir, volleyball, dance team, track and field.

"I have directly seen that when you put in the work, you will get the results...Pushing myself to be the best that I can be and holding myself to a higher standard is something that I am very proud of."

College plans: To major in biochemistry at Concordia College-Moorhead, and to participate in track and field, and choir.



Benjamin Walechka

St. Clair High School Region 2A

G.P.A. 4.039

Band, choir, One Act Play, speech, football, wrestling, track and field, clay target.

"Academics have helped define my place in life as it shows there is no limit in what I can know—just whether I stop myself."

College plans: To pursue a mechanical engineering degree at University of Minnesota-Duluth, and to participate in choir and theater.



Grace Moeller

Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial High School Region 2A

G.P.A. 4.0

Band, choir, speech, robotics, visual arts, cross country, Alpine skiing, basketball, track and field.

“Making the connection between hard work and success is one of the most important lessons I have learned through my involvement in all three areas.”

College plans: To study Chinese and seek a pre-law degree at St. Olaf College, and to participate in cross country and track, and band.



Micah Schaap

Southwest Minnesota Christian High School Region 3A

G.P.A. 3.949

Band, choir, One Act Play, soccer, basketball, track and field.

“Not only has it been an ongoing lesson in teamwork and collaboration, it’s also a glimpse into the different people you will meet in life, and the challenges and goals that can unite you.”

College plans: To pursue an education degree at Dordt University in Sioux Center, Iowa, and to participate in track and field.



Brooklyn Conrad

Ortonville High School Region 3A

G.P.A. 4.0

Band, choir, speech, robotics, cross country, wrestling, track and field.

“I have learned that I am not afraid to try new things and this fearlessness will help me to overcome life’s challenges.”

College plans: To major in mathematics with a minor in finance at Southwest Minnesota State University and participate in cross country, track and field, and choir.



Elijah Koopman

Heritage Christian Academy Region 4A

G.P.A. 4.068

Band, choir, One Act Play, cross country, Nordic skiing, track and field.

"I am thankful for all the opportunities my involvement has provided. These activities have brought me closer to others, built up my perseverance and integrity and offered me valuable leadership experiences."

College plans: To pursue a business degree at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois and participate in band, choir, theater and intramural sports.



Abigail Kuphal

New Life Academy Region 4A

G.P.A. 4.18

Choir, soccer, track and field.

"Being a captain for my soccer team has taught me that leadership is not just about telling people what to do or being in charge. It is about encouragement, influence, and guidance."

College plans: To major in nursing, pre-medicine or physical therapy at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and to participate in club soccer.



Makullen Kleist

Eden Valley-Watkins High School Region 5A

G.P.A. 3.753

Band, choir, One Act Play, speech, football, cross country, basketball, track and field.

"Track is where I learned a sense of competition...Football taught me the importance of teamwork, but Basketball taught me the importance of family."

College plans: To earn degrees in teaching and history at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and participate in theater.



Shelby Geislinger

Eden Valley-Watkins High School Region 5A

G.P.A. 3.933

Choir, speech, volleyball, basketball, softball.

"I learned the importance of perseverance and grit. I learned that self-determination is key to achieving what I wanted to accomplish."

College plans: To study psychology at North Dakota State University and participate in choir, DECA and softball.



Isaac Scherfenberg

Battle Lake High School Region 6A

G.P.A. 3.946

Band, choir, One Act Play, speech, cross country, basketball, track and field.

"I learned to be persistent and keep trying and giving my all, even at things I'm not the best at, through my many years of playing basketball, even when I was one of the less skilled players on the team."

College plans: To pursue a computer engineering and computer science degree.



Caryn Marty

Chokio-Alberta High School Region 6A

G.P.A. 4.06

Band, choir, One Act Play, speech, cross country, basketball, track and field.

"My arts have taught me confidence...My athletics have taught me perseverance...Academics have taught me that hard work pays off. I never give anything less than my best and I do not stop until I am satisfied."

College plans: To pursue a degree in industrial engineering and management at North Dakota State University.



Chad Hart

Esko High School Region 7A

G.P.A. 3.775

Band, choir, One Act Play, robotics, cross country, football, basketball, track and field.

"The arts, the strength of my high school career. The arts programs at my school have showed me time and again that there is no limit to where you can go."

College plans: To study nursing at Bethel University and participate in choir and track and field.



Andrea Pocernich

Cromwell-Wright High School Region 7A

G.P.A. 4.0

Band, choir, volleyball, basketball, softball.

"I chose to work hard musically in order to show people that being in choir can be a good thing, and simply that finding your talent and using it is the best way to thrive."

College plans: Her college plans are undecided, but Andrea hopes to play basketball.



Jonathan Krueger

East Grand Forks High School Region 8A

G.P.A. 3.95

Band, choir, cross country, basketball, track and field, clay target.

"As an athlete you have the responsibility to be a good role model because others are looking up to you. As an athlete, I always encourage my teammates and try to mentor them to be the best that they can be."

College plans: To study agriculture at North Dakota State University or Concordia College-Moorhead and participate in cross country, track and field, band and choir.



Marin Roragen

Fertile-Beltrami High School Region 8A

G.P.A. 4.0

Band, choir, volleyball, basketball, track and field.

"The arts, band and choir have taught me how to work well in groups. I've learned to listen to those around me and value their constructive criticism. My athletic career has taught me that leadership is crucial to success."

College plans: To study accounting at North Dakota State University.



Connor Ginskey

Owatonna High School Region 1AA

G.P.A. 4.088

Band, choir, cross country, basketball, track and field.

"Participating in the arts at OHS and performing in the top ensembles has taught me life lessons such as leadership and accountability, and I have created friendships that will last a lifetime."

College plans: To study finance.



Maria Hanson

Rochester Century High School Region 1AA

G.P.A. 4.65

Band, orchestra, soccer, Nordic skiing, Lacrosse.

"The central lesson I have learned for my participation is teamwork...It has taught me about the importance of hard work and commitment. Success can only come after practice and a will to keep pushing yourself until you win."

College plans: To pursue a degree in biological sciences and participate in intramural soccer.



Nolan Prokosch

Hutchinson High School Region 2AA

G.P.A. 4.2

Choir, football, basketball, track and field.

“Whether it’s on the field or in the classroom, I believe accountability, working hard, and striving to be the best you can be can lead you to do great things.”

College plans: To pursue a degree in kinesiology at University of Wisconsin-Madison and participate in choir.



Megan Friedrichs

Mankato East High School Region 2AA

G.P.A. 4.162

Band, choir, orchestra, One Act Play, volleyball, cross country, track and field.

“My time spent with diverse groups of people throughout multiple different ensembles, teams, classrooms, and productions has grown my desire to treat everyone with respect and dignity, while increasing my ability to effectively collaborate with others despite our differences.”

College plans: To study nursing at University of Northwestern-St. Paul and participate in choir and theater.



Leyton Simmering

Rosemount High School Region 3AA

G.P.A. 3.455

Band, choir, football, soccer, Alpine skiing, track and field.

“I try to be the best I can be in all aspects of life...I feel you need to lead by example as well as push your teammates and classmates to be better in what they do, working side by side.”

College plans: To study aviation at Kansas State University and participate in football.



Catalina Decker

Eagan High School Region 3AA

G.P.A. 4.0

Band, cross country, hockey, track and field.

“...it was my participation in high school arts and athletics, in addition to rigorous academics, that has allowed me to further mature and grow assured in my own identity.”

College plans: To pursue a pre-medicine and neuroscience degree with a minor in Spanish at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, play club hockey and French Horn.



Brenden Ravndal

St. Anthony Village High School Region 4AA

G.P.A. 4.056

Band, robotics, soccer, football, basketball, track and field, baseball.

“I love sharing all that I have accomplished with others so that they can draw inspiration with what I have done just as much as I love watching and learning from other peoples’ successes.”

College plans: To study business and economics and participate in band.



Fina Mooney

St. Anthony Village High School Region 4AA

G.P.A. 3.982

Choir, speech, visual arts, cross country, golf.

“If someone looks up to something accomplished, it is my turn to give encouragement that they can do the same. When people look up to me for voicing my opinion, it is my turn to show I believe in them and that they can follow their dreams and paths.”

College plans: To pursue an art history degree, minors in Italian studies, museum & curatorial studies and participate in art history and running clubs.



Andrew Stevenson

Fridley High School Region 5AA

G.P.A. 4.204

Band, choir, One Act Play, speech, cross country, tennis.

"I've grown by my peers' encouragement, my coaches' challenging, and by my teachers' and directors' critiques infinitely more than I have by learning how to practice a skill, whether it was academic, artistic or athletic."

College plans: To pursue biblical studies and pastoral ministry and participate in jazz ensemble and tennis.



Narindwa Semakula

Irondale High School Region 5AA

G.P.A. 4.15

Orchestra, speech, swimming and diving, dance team, track and field.

"[My involvement] has given me the opportunity to engage effectively as a team member and to be a part of different social interactions and dynamics amongst the student groups. This exposure helped my discipline and personality grow to help me become the best version of myself I can be."

College plans: To pursue a biomedical engineering degree, and to participate in track and field, orchestra and swimming.



Alec Olson

Wayzata High School Region 6AA

G.P.A. 4.1

Band, cross country, Nordic skiing, track and field.

"...my friend and I co-founded an astronomy club. We have used it to continue pursuing this academic passion of ours; we share our love for this science with other students while continually learning more about space ourselves."

College plans: To pursue a degree in aerospace engineering and a minor in music performance at the University of Minnesota, and participate in running, band and orchestra.



Elsa Bergman

Hopkins High School Region 6AA

G.P.A. 3.922

Band, cross country, Nordic skiing, track and field.

"I have learned how to work well with other people and help them and myself at the same time. As a team captain in both track and Nordic, I focus on the whole team, rather than just my own improvement."

College plans: To study in the College of Science and Engineering at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities and compete in running or skiing.



Aidan Fitzpatrick

Duluth East High School Region 7AA

G.P.A. 3.975

Band, choir, orchestra, cross country, Nordic skiing, track and field.

"Academics has taught me the valuable lesson of going above and beyond...music has taught me the valuable lessons of teamwork, dedication, and expression...Lastly, athletics has taught me the lessons of leadership and peer support."

College plans: To major in music education or engineering at St. Olaf College.



Camille Wikstrom

Hermantown High School Region 7AA

G.P.A. 3.9

Band, swimming and diving, basketball, softball.

"Academics, Arts, and Athletics have helped me grow by teaching me to get along and work with all types of people. Being involved in all three activities has helped me learn balance, organization, and time management."

College plans: To pursue a physical education degree at University of Wisconsin-Superior, and participate in softball.



Kallen Hanzsek-Brill

St. Cloud Apollo High School Region 8AA

G.P.A. 4.324

Band, choir, cross country, swimming and diving, track and field.

"I grow most when I help those around me to grow...The most valuable thing I've learned is to build relationships and help those around me...becoming better than yourself is where joy lies."

College plans: To study mathematics and music performance at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and participate in ensembles and orchestras.



Kessa Mara

Willmar Senior High School Region 8AA

G.P.A. 4.073

Band, choir, visual arts, tennis, volleyball, hockey, golf.

"These activities have taught me that attitude and effort are the two things that I can control. If I have a positive attitude and give one-hundred-and-ten percent effort, then I know I am doing everything I can to be my very best student, athlete, and musician."

College plans: To study biology in a pre-medicine program at Winona State University and play on the Division 2 Women's Golf team.

2021 Triple "A" Award Winners



Kadyn Triebenbach
Osakis



Preston Rohloff
Hancock



Allison Benjamin
East Ridge



Lane Versteeg
Owatonna

Past Triple "A" Award Winners

1989

Laura Stone, Canby
Darren Kraabel, Menahga
Shannon Monahan, Alexandria
Jim Hornsten, Chisago Lakes

1990

Lori Kocher, Mankato West
Matthew Kelso, Chaska
Leanne Amiot, Crookston Central
Michael Hopper, Westbrook

1991

Emilie Hanson, Prior Lake
Scott Norquist, Forest Lake
Carrie Redman, Medford
Andy Werder, Browerville

1992

Karrn Gustafson, Cambridge
Tom Riitters, Little Falls
Chad Solie, Hancock
Jill Wolverton, Fairmont

1993

Erin Kolbe, Owatonna
Ryan Williams, St. Cloud Apollo
Jill Temple, Osakis
Jorn Pung, Braham

1994

Kristina Kozlovsky, North Branch
Timothy Walther, Columbia Heights
Kristin Olson, Glencoe
Eric Engelmann, Glencoe

1995

Brigit Riley, Columbia Heights
Randy McLain, St. Francis
Natasha Hamann, Perham
Michael Stoick, St. Michael-Albertville

1996

Marguerite Thorn, Albert Lea
Aaron Crowser, Alexandria
Abby Stritesky, Ogilvie
Brent Stiles, Lewiston-Altura

1997

Amanda Jepson, Monticello
Eric Anderson, Fairmont
Christy Boraas, Lac qui Parle Valley
David Joosten, Balaton

1998

Kathryn Eisenmenger, Fairmont
Todd Ferguson, Alexandria
Janelle Evenson, Pelican Rapids
Whitney Kuehl, Westbrook-Walnut Grove

1999

Meghan Stritesky, Ogilvie
Timothy Nelson, Braham
Sarah Geers, Robbinsdale Cooper
David Bradley, Rochester Mayo

2000

Janie Hanson, Blue Earth Area
Mark Borgen, Badger
Lindsay Hartmann, Alexandria
Scott Ferguson, Alexandria

2001

Angela Hummel, Jackson County Central
Jeremiah Aakre, Underwood
Amber Swenson, Park Center
Jonathan Dumm, Alexandria

2002

Heather Danckwartz, Wabasha-Kellogg
Ben Aakre, Underwood
Rebekah Solem, Thief River Falls Lincoln
Andy Bohnsack, Dassel-Cokato

2003

Elisa Ingvalson, Blooming Prairie
Alex Mohrbacher, Warroad
Elizabeth Eisenmenger, Fairmont
Philip Liffin, Waconia

2004

Kelsey Aakre, Barnesville
Matthew Hanson, Dodge Center
Pamela Chapman, Winona
Stephen Thorn, Albert Lea

2005

Hannah Sieling, Watertown-Mayer
Chad Karlsson, Rush City
Amanda Kern, St. Cloud Apollo
Daniel LaFountaine, St. Cloud Apollo

2006

Leah Kay, Dassel-Cokato
Josef Nevers Tofte, Duluth
Andrea Millerbernd, Littlefork-Big Falls
Daniel Murray, Blue Earth

2007

Lisa Hilde, Osakis
Carl Stenoien, Underwood
Quentin Dudley, Worthington
Deborah Barany, Roseville Area

2008

Ellen Gustafson, Houston
Ali Khalili, Byron
Cecilia Noecker, St. Paul Highland Park
David Dulak, Red Wing

2009

Kaari Jensen, Pierz
Sam Thielen, Wheaton
Sarah Bingea, Delano
Jakob Lindaas, Moorhead

2010

Sonja Peterson, Two Harbors
Peter Wollin, Greenbush-Middle River
Ellen Degler, Chaska
Mathew Schnorenberg, Mankato East

2011

Ellen Ferry, Underwood
Logan Spitzack, Triton, Dodge Center
Julia Harrison, Mound-Westonka
Andrew Hausmann, Rosemount

2012

Katie Ellingworth, Redwood Valley
D.J. Cline, Battle Lake
Savannah Wunderlich, Owatonna
Kirk Busche, Rochester Century

2013

Katiianne Brockpahler, Sebeka
Steffan Stroh, Underwood
Allison Reichl, St. Cloud Apollo
Ted Deitz, Alexandria

2014

Taylor Kraemer, Osakis
Dillon John, Adrian
Shaelyn Sorensen, Tartan, Oakdale
William Dudley, Worthington

2015

Heidi Bau, Murray County Central
Charles Stejskal, Maple Lake
Maria Leibel, Cambridge-Isanti
Oliver Wolyniec, Worthington

2016

Madison McKeever, Win-E-Mac
Jack Erickson, Murray County Central
Maité Marin-Mera, Willmar
Matthew Majerle, Brainerd

2017

Kiera Olson, Fillmore Central
Carter Peterson, Underwood
Anja Maijala, Cloquet
Eric Wilson, Benilde-St. Margaret's

2018

Brianna Kreft, West Central Area
Noah Carlson, Houston
Allison Prestby, Alexandria Area
Kevin Cornelius, Orono

2019

Cassidy Smith, Tracy Area
Shan Donovan, Onamia
Lauren Bastian, Anoka
Brockdon Lawhead, Austin

2020

Kindra Peterson, Underwood
Christopher Borash, Royalton
AnnaGrace Nelson, Cambridge-Isanti
Oliver Paleen, St. Paul Highland Park

2021

Kadyn Triebenbach Osakis
Preston Rohloff, Hancock
Allison Benjamin, East Ridge
Lane Versteeg, Owatonna

Purpose of the Triple "A" Program

- To recognize and honor high school seniors who have excelled in the classroom, the arts and athletics.
- To elevate academic standards and create greater awareness of League-sponsored activities and their values.
- To provide member schools of the League with the opportunity to participate in a statewide program that supports, promotes, and recognizes academic and extracurricular achievements.

Nomination Criteria

To be eligible for the Academics, Arts, and Athletics Award students must:

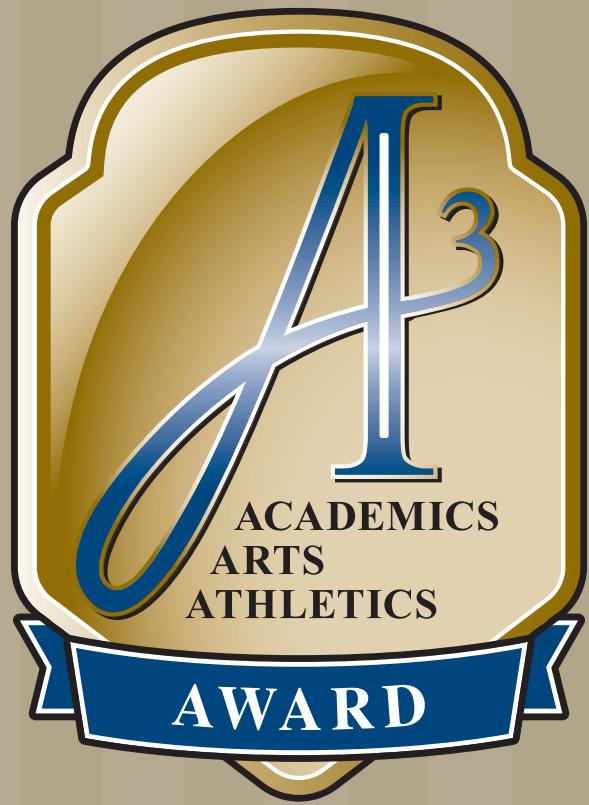
- be a high school senior at the time of nomination. Nominations are limited to two qualifying students per school—one male and one female.
- have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher at the date of nomination.
- participate in League-sponsored athletic and fine arts activities.
- comply with the MSHSL's Student Code of Conduct.



McDonald's Owner/Operators
are proud to sponsor the
**Minnesota State High School League
Academics, Arts & Athletics
Award Program**

*Congratulations
Triple "A" Finalists*





ACADEMICS, ARTS & ATHLETICS

