

IHSAA News Release



Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc.
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Cato Memorial Scholarships to be presented to 13 Seniors

The Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc. is pleased to announce this year's group of 13 senior student-athletes who will be honored next week with the 2017 C. Eugene Cato Memorial Scholarship Awards.

To reward the efforts of Indiana's complete student-athletes, Methodist Sports Medicine, Indiana Farm Bureau Insurance, Indianapolis Colts, Indiana Fever, Indiana Pacers, Sport Graphics, Inc., and WTHR-13 have partnered with the IHSAA to sponsor the program. These well-rounded, positive role models have demonstrated excellence in academics, school and community involvement, character, sportsmanship and citizenship.

Each individual will receive a \$2,500 scholarship for their prep accomplishments and be recognized on Thursday, April 20, 2017 at the Indiana Roof Ballroom in downtown Indianapolis as part of the 12th Annual Thomas A. Brady Sports Achievement Awards established by Methodist Sports Medicine.

This year's recipients are:

2017 IHSAA / C. Eugene Cato Memorial Scholarship Award Recipients

Aaron Bennett	Westfield
Courtney Blackwell	Whiting
Logan Bontrager	Center Grove
Nathan Bourne	Angola
Brant Buczkowski	Caston
Brandt Callahan	Bedford North Lawrence
Brayden Chou	Northwestern
Kayla Hawthorne	Indianapolis Crispus Attucks
Harley Sinders	Clay City
Megan Skadberg	McCutcheon
Erin Sullivan	Southport
Janaya Woehnker	Fort Wayne North Side
Mary Jane Zeh	Harrison (West Lafayette)



Each student completed and submitted a formal application and had to meet certain criteria to qualify including: 1) be enrolled and participating in interscholastic athletics at an IHSAA member school during this school year; 2) be a senior at an IHSAA member school who will graduate this school year; 3) win a varsity letter as an athlete in at least one of the 21 IHSAA-sanctioned athletic programs; 4) be nominated by the school's principal or athletic director; 5) carry a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale or the equivalent; 6) have no violations of the school's athletic code of conduct; 7) The student must not have been ejected from any IHSAA contest due to unsportsmanlike behavior; 8) The student must verify that he/she has made a commitment to remain substance-free throughout high school.

More than 100 applications were received from across the state and a blue ribbon panel of six individuals decided upon the final recipients. They are: Bill Benner, Senior Vice President, Pacers Sports & Entertainment; Joe Fonderoli, Director of Special Events, Indianapolis Colts; Rich Nye, Eyewitness Sports Reporter, WTHR Channel 13; Dr. Dale Snead, Methodist Sports Medicine; Davis Whitfield, Chief Operating Officer, National Federation of State High School Associations and; Bobby Cox, Commissioner, Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc.

The scholarship program is named in tribute to the late Commissioner C. Eugene Cato who led the IHSAA from 1983 to 1995 and served as assistant commissioner from 1976 to 1983. "Gene's" passion for athletics and his belief in the intrinsic value of athletic competition on the formation of a child's character enabled Gene to positively impact generations of young men and women with his well-known "Firm, Fair, and Friendly" approach to caring for others. He passed away in 2008.

Since 2003-04, the IHSAA has recognized 165 outstanding student-athletes with scholarships totaling \$412,500.

The honored guest for the 2017 Brady Sports Achievement Awards is Tamika Catchings, former Indiana Fever Star, who will receive the Brady Lifetime Achievement Award and also serve as keynote speaker for the evening.

The Methodist Sports Medicine Research and Education Foundation also will honor four Indiana high school and college student-athletes that have overcome injury or hardship with Comeback Awards.

For additional information on the awards dinner, visit the [Methodist Sports Medicine website](#).

Westfield's **Aaron Bennett** has excelled both on and off the field of play. Achieving a 4.29 GPA in the classroom, he is a member of the Math Club, Dance Marathon, National Honor Society, Interact Club, class officer, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, student athletic board, and ACTS (A Chance To Serve). Aaron has earned 11 varsity letters from three different sports. He is a two-time captain in both Cross Country and Track and Field, and is also a senior leader on the basketball team. Away from school, he is constantly active in community service projects at Grace Church, Carey Ridge elementary, and the Shepherd Community Center among others. He has also gone on service trips to both Haiti and El Salvador. Aaron is the son of Joe and Tia Bennett, and he plans to attend Indiana University.

Courtney Blackwell of Whiting holds the distinction of being ranked first in her respective high school class. She is a part of the National Honor Society, Mayor's Youth Advisory Council, Stand Club, Booster Club, Spanish Club, GSSC Leadership Conference, and is a class officer at Whiting. In athletics, Courtney has participated in basketball, softball, and volleyball, lettering a total of nine times. A team captain for multiple sports, she has earned many awards and accolades for her performance on both the field and in the classroom. She is the daughter of Dave and Laura Blackwell. She will be attending St. Joseph's College.

Logan Bontrager of Center Grove ranks in the top 25 in his class out of 579 with a cumulative GPA of 4.467. Lettering three times in both track and football, Logan is a past recipient of the IHSAA Phil N. Eskew Mental Attitude Award. He has won a state championship in both football as a starting defensive back and in the

1600-meter relay for track. While at Center Grove, he worked with Easter Seals Crossroads to create a camp that allowed children with disabilities and special needs to experience the highlights of being a “real” football player. Logan is the son of John and Shanda Bontrager. He is currently undecided on his college choice.

Angola’s **Nathan Bourne** is at the top of his class rank out of 169. He has compiled a 4.393 GPA. Some of his school activities include Student-Athlete Advisory Council, National Honor Society, Spanish National Honor Society, SWARM Freshman Peer Mentoring Program, Class Officer, and Spanish Club. He is also the class president, as well as the president of the Spanish Club and National Honor Society. As for as athletics, Nathan has excelled in three sports. He has lettered three times in track and field, four times in swimming, and four times in cross country. In Swimming, he was honored with KPC Prep-of-the-Year, KPC All-Area, the Most Dedicated Award, Hornet Award, and the Larry Watkins Award. Nathan’s involvement in the community is significant, he helps at camps to teach kids how to play volleyball and to swim. The son of Wes and Angela Bourne, Nathan will be attending the University of Findlay.

Brant Buczkowski of Caston is a two-sport athlete, lettering a total of seven times in cross country and baseball. He ranks first in his respective class and holds a 4.02 GPA. In his high school career at Caston, Brant has distinguished himself academically and as a leader. He was the Math Student of the Year as a sophomore, Science Student of the Year as a junior, and placed first in the conference math contest. A few activities he’s involved in at school are Student Council, Spanish Club, Key Club, National Honor Society, Pep Club, conference Math Teams, Caston Christian Club, and band. Brant is also the Senior class Vice-President and his band’s section leader. He is the son of Michael and Kathy Buczkowski, and will further his education at Indiana University in Bloomington.

Brandt Callahan of Bedford North Lawrence has performed at a high level in the class room and on the athletic field. A six-time letter winner in baseball and tennis, Brandt ranks third in his class out of 304 and has a GPA of 4.26. He is a member of the IHSAA Student Advisory Committee and the President of his high school’s Champions Together Club and Student Athlete Leadership Team. The official score keeper for his school’s freshman boys and girls basketball teams, Brandt has also dedicated his time to officiating baseball and basketball games at his local Boys and Girls Club. He is the son of Jeff and Paige Callahan. An Academic All-State tennis player the past two years, he will continue his education at Rockhurst University.

A three-sport varsity letterman, Northwestern’s **Brayden Chou** is an exceptional student-athlete. Ranked number one in his respective class, Brayden holds a 4.6 GPA. He is a leader in both athletics and academics, being named captain of his tennis, swimming, math, and science teams. As an eagle scout, he uses the skills and tools he’s learned to help his community. At school, he assists in freshman orientation, plans dances, and is a peer tutor. He has also helped clean up tornado damages, create a memorial for Deputy Karl Koontz, and made dog beds for the Kokomo Human Society. He has received awards for Academic All-State and is on track to earn 12 varsity letters. Brayden is the son of Tom and Nellie Chou. He plans to attend Purdue University.

Kayla Hawthorne of Indianapolis Crispus Attucks ranks first in her class with a 4.1 GPA. She has lettered in four different sports (volleyball, track, tennis, and wrestling) in her four years of high school. In the community, she spends a great amount of time in services such as being an assistant teacher for the Children’s Church, volunteering at marathons, athletic events, and community outreaches. Kayla is also the treasurer of the Marching and Concert bands. In her sophomore year, she was awarded the Ben Carson Scholarship Award. This year, she was presented the Student Athlete Achievement Award from Citizens Energy Group and the Edie Atwell Award from the Indiana Education Association’s Human Rights Committee. She is the daughter of Charlotte and Robert Hawthorne. Kayla will be attending Howard University.

Clay City’s **Harley Sindors** holds outstanding merit as her class Valedictorian. As a student with a 4.0 GPA, she is Student Council Vice-President, Student Against Destructive Decisions President, a National Honor Society member, Senior Class President, and is involved in many other activities. The captain of both her basketball and softball teams, Harley has earned eight varsity letters during her tenure at Clay City. Spending at least six hours a month at the Clay City Food Pantry, Harley also helped organize her community’s Thanksgiving Food Baskets

service that distributed food to over 100 families. On top of many other impressive community service involvements, one that stands out is Motivated for Morgan, where she helped plan a high school softball game that raised over \$20,000 for a family in need. The daughter of Jason and Amber Sindors, she will be attending Indiana University Purdue University of Indianapolis (IUPUI).

Megan Skadberg of McCutcheon holds the distinct honor of being ranked number one in her class out of 418. The two-sport athlete (in both soccer and tennis) and cheerleader carries a 4.0 GPA along with her six varsity letters and numerous awards and accolades. She was the Treasurer for Student Council for two years, the President of Future Business Leaders of America for two years, the Vice-President of the National Honor Society, and part of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. In her community, she has volunteered at a local church's resource center, clothing closet, and food pantry. Since her junior year, she has been involved with the Lafayette Mayor's Youth Council, in which students from multiple high schools work together to accomplish collective goals. She is the daughter of Erik and Jill Skadberg. Megan will further her education in Bloomington at Indiana University.

Southport's **Erin Sullivan** is ranked first in her class out of 483. She has a 4.12 cumulative GPA, and is a three-sport athlete (basketball, soccer, and track) with ten varsity letters. She was also a member of the National Honor Society and the band at Southport. She was named captain her junior and senior year for soccer, and has received numerous awards and honors for her achievements in all three of her sports. Erin has completed many service projects, including work at her local St. Vincent De Paul shelter and Ronald McDonald House. She has also helped with a youth soccer clinic at Southport High School. Erin is the daughter of David and Dana Sullivan. She is deciding between Notre Dame and Indiana University.

Janaya Woehner of Fort Wayne North Side is a three-sport athlete, lettering ten times in Cross Country, Swimming, and Track. She ranks 13th in her class out of 400 and has accumulated a 4.0 GPA. Outside of athletics, she is also a member of the Dance Club, Student Leadership Committee, Student Council, National Honor Society, and Prom Committee. In the community, she has been involved in Kids Surviving Cancer and has volunteered on a Haiti Mission Trip. She has been elected captain for every sport she has played, as well as President of Student Leadership Committee, Student Council President, Senior Class President, and National Honor Society Vice-President. Janaya has received many awards, both for athletics and academics, including the Wendy's Heisman School Winner. Janaya is the daughter of Alan and Naomi Woehner. She will be furthering her education at Indiana University.

From West Lafayette, Harrison's **Mary Jane Zeh** has shown to be exceptional in every aspect. She holds the honor of being her class Valedictorian. The three-sport varsity athlete in Soccer, Swimming, and tennis also carries a 4.0 GPA. At her school, Mary Jane is involved in Student Council, National Honor Society, Athletic Leadership Council, Role Models Impacting Students Excellence, Letterman's Club, Travel Club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and several more. She went out of the country to help others, most notably a mission trip to Jamaica. She has been named captain of each sport she has played, and has also served as the Committee Chair for Champions Together/Special Olympics. She has received awards for Academic Excellence, Mental Attitude, Academic All-State in soccer, and the Top Honors English Student. Mary Jane is the daughter of Elizabeth and Jeff Zeh. She is currently undecided on her college choice.

About the Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc. (IHSAA)

The IHSAA is a voluntary, not-for-profit organization that is self-supporting without the use of tax monies. Since its founding in 1903, the Association's mission has been to provide wholesome, educational athletics for the secondary schools of Indiana. Its member high schools - public, institutional, parochial and private - pay no annual membership fee or incur entry fees to play in the Association's tournaments. A state tournament series is conducted annually in 21 sports, 10 for girls, 10 for boys and one co-ed (unified track and field). A 19-person board of directors, elected by member school principals, governs the organization.