

Capital District



Sports Women of the Year



2025

Capital District Sports Women of the Year Awards Gala

August 4, 2025 GE Theatre at Proctors 7:00 PM



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WOMEN OF THE YEAR**

Way To go Kayla Beaudoin!



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The 2025 Capital District Sports Women of the Year Awards Program was edited by Eric McDowell. Feature stories written by Harrison Huntley. Printing services provided by Miller Printing of Amsterdam, NY. Cover design by Alex Jarvis of Goldilocks Promos of Latham, NY. Photographs provided by family members and institutions of the honorees, CBS 6, Christina Primero Photography, Lauren Hull and Angelina Valente. Special thanks to our generous sponsors, advertisers, and donors for their support of CDSWOY.

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Yes, it's true. Time flies.

It was five years ago that the Capital District Sports Women of the Year organization embarked on this journey. Each year, we bring together remarkable, dedicated, special young women from our area high schools and colleges together. We honor them and recognize their achievements in academics, athletics and community service. We gather local sports media together to discuss those who were nominated for CDSWOY by athletic directors. The selections are made, and throughout the summer the names are announced.

There are over 100 scholastic institutions in Section 2 and 14 colleges in our region. Each Athletic Director can only nominate one individual. And tonight, the selected few are here, to bless the stage and celebrate their achievements.

In the first week of August, we bring them all together, with their families and friends, to historic Proctors. For this one evening, along with musical performances and a prominent sports personality providing her wisdom, we pack the room with smiles and happy tears. Then, at the end, we bring them all down together. An undefeated team. A team made up of people who have already accomplished so much and yet will accomplish even more in their futures. The spotlight shines on them, but they also light up the stage on their own.

Tonight, 14 stars will join our CDSWOY family. After this evening, we will have presented awards to 78 individuals. Many of our first- and second-year CDSWOY scholastic recipients have now completed college and have embarked on their next journey. Our collegiate recipients are established in their young careers. We look back and see valedictorians, school record holders, regional all-stars, and students in graduate school. We see greatness.

We will also present the CDSWOY Appreciation Award to Liz Bishop, recently retired from WRGB-TV, CBS6. We honor her not only for her decades of service to our community and her award-winning career in journalism, but we also honor her for her pioneering work for women in sports media. She helped pave the way for today's women in broadcast and print media. Thank you, Liz! We are so fortunate to have you join our ladies on their special evening.

Thanks to Ashley Miller, our MC, for her input and time interviewing our speaker, not just this year but for the past four years as well. Thank you to New York State Senator James Tedisco for providing proclamations. Thank you to Harrison Huntley for his wonderful exclusive feature stories on our recipients. Thanks to Angelina Valente, an award-winning performer. Thanks to our CDSWOY Board, Alissa Collins, Clare Howard, Jennifer McDowell, and Brendon Phillips. A special thank you to all our sponsors and families who support CDSWOY.

To our recipients, time flies as well. There are only 24 hours in a day. But you sure make the most of every hour of every day. August 4, 2025 is YOUR day.

Sincerely,



Eric McDowell
President
Capital District Sports Women of the Year, Inc.

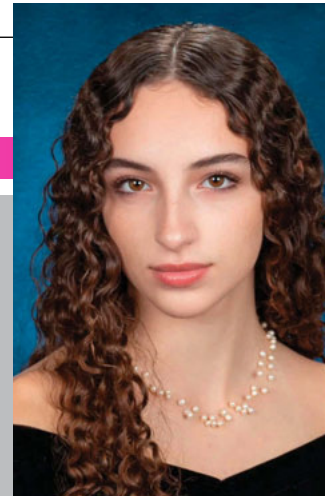


(Left to right): Brendon Phillips, Clare Howard, Alissa Collins, Jennifer McDowell, Eric McDowell.



Jessica,
Your ***Mustang Family***
is proud of your
accomplishments.
You have a very
bright future
ahead of you.

Jessica Baeckmann
Cairo-Durham High School



Jessica Baeckmann has practically rewritten the track & field record book at Cairo-Durham High School. As a hurdler, she holds the 50, 55, and 200 meter indoor records as well as the 100 meter hurdles outdoor record. As a jumper, she holds the long jump, high jump, and triple jump records in both indoor and outdoor seasons. When you throw in the two relay records she holds, that makes 12 school records for Baeckmann in her career. On top of all the records, Baeckmann was a Patroon Conference 1st Team All Star and even won sectionals in the pentathlon.

All of these achievements come with an immense amount of training and dedication. “She consistently demonstrated exceptional speed and endurance during her four-hour-a-day, six-days-a-week training sessions,” said Alexs Ray, Cairo-Durham High School track and field coach. She’s applied that same hard work to her studies as well. Baeckmann was on the high honor roll all through high school and graduated in the top five of her class at Cairo-Durham. “She always pushed herself to achieve personal bests while still maintaining high academic standards for herself,” Ray said.

But despite all her success in running and jumping, there’s one event that Baeckmann says she won’t do: distance. “Originally, my track coach tried to get me to do cross-country, which I thought was terrible,” she said. “So I decided to do tennis instead, and I loved it.” Baeckmann found almost as much success on the court as on the track. She was a Patroon Conference 1st Team All Star as a junior and senior and also won the Patroon Conference Championship.

Even with all this training, Baeckmann still found the time to complete over 100 hours of community service. Through the Interact Club,

Baeckmann fought food insecurity in her community by packing bags every Wednesday. She also got to serve in Costa Rica through the club when the team traveled there to build a shelter. “We woke up early every morning and went to the site, and dug dirt, poured concrete and painted,” Baeckmann said. “I really enjoyed the host family and their kids. I still think about them today, I miss them and want to go back soon.”

A lover of reading, Baeckmann says her next step will be studying English Language at Marist, where she also plans to minor in art. She plans to use these skills in publishing, perhaps designing book covers or otherwise working to see books from concept to the shelves. “I love to read books and I’ve been really interested in this subject for a while,” Baeckmann said. “My favorite genre would probably be romance—I love the Twilight series.”

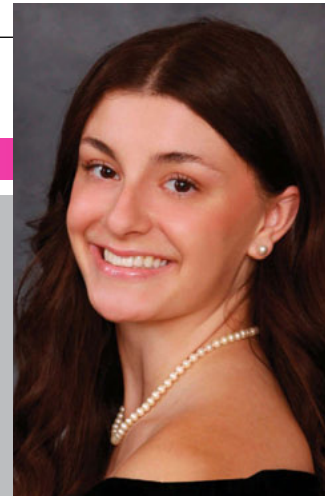
Jessica Baeckmann is a testament to the value of hard work. Through tireless effort and countless hours training, studying, and serving, she is what Coach Ray calls “an exceptional athlete and a valuable team member.” Baeckmann says winning this award made her efforts feel recognized. “Receiving this athletic award is a symbol of the hard work and dedication I’ve poured into my sports,” she said. “I feel a great sense of accomplishment and pride to have those efforts recognized.”

Gregory Hagan, Cairo-Durham athletic director, agrees. “Jessica has proven to be a very determined and dedicated individual striving to better herself in every facet of her life.”



Kayla, Congratulations on this incredible milestone! Your dedication and commitment to sports, academics and our community are truly inspiring, however; we are most proud of the young woman you've become.
With love and admiration,
The Home Team – Mom, Dad & Hannah

Kayla Beaudoin
Tamarac High School



Kayla Beaudoin played five years of varsity basketball at Tamarac High School. She made over 100 three-pointers over that time, scoring over 400 points in her senior season and was twice named a Times Union All-Star. In the classroom, she's held high honor roll since seventh grade and was a member of the National Honor Society.

All these accomplishments would be impressive for anyone to hold. But they are even more impressive for Beaudoin, who takes medicine twice a day, every day, to control her epilepsy.

Beaudoin had over 40 seizures before finishing the first year of her life. Her parents received her epilepsy diagnosis when she was six months old. That was where the Northeast Epilepsy Foundation stepped in. "The foundation came in and supported my parents really early on," Beaudoin said. "They were with them every step of the way through all the doctors' appointments and training."

Despite the scary diagnosis, Beaudoin said she never felt like she was different from the other kids. "I think everybody has their version of normal, and that was my normal," she said. "That's all I knew, and my family supported me through that."

With her epilepsy under control thanks to medication, doctors assured Beaudoin and her parents that she could do just about anything. "They said the only two things you can't do are scuba diving and skydiving," she said. "They basically said the world is yours."

With the green light from doctors, Beaudoin's father quickly got her involved in the sport he loved. Since her father is the head girls basketball coach at Tamarac, Beaudoin said she can't remember not being around the game. "I fell in love with it," she said. "I love the team atmosphere. I think being a part of something bigger than yourself is so important for us to learn."

In addition to her love for basketball, volleyball was another sport that captured the young athlete's heart. "I always say basketball is my first love. But volleyball is my second," Beaudoin said. "Even though I started later,

I immediately fell in love with it. And then, for my freshman year, I got pulled up to varsity, which was a big accomplishment. At the time, our team was very good and we had a lot of seniors involved."

Just like in basketball, Beaudoin thrived in a team atmosphere on the volleyball court. She was a three-time all-star and served as a captain her senior year. "Kayla possesses remarkable character traits, such as integrity, empathy, resilience, trustworthiness, determination, diligence, perseverance and is a natural leader," said her father, Tamarac Varsity Girls Basketball coach Ron Beaudoin.

That leadership was also evident outside the gym. Beaudoin and her family have organized Kayla's Cure Crew, a group that raises money to cure epilepsy. She's helped organize a team to attend a Walk to End Epilepsy that's raised over \$75,000 towards a cure. These efforts culminated with Beaudoin traveling to Washington, D.C. to meet with federal legislators and advocate for epilepsy awareness and support.

Beaudoin's exceptional story will continue next year as she joins the SUNY Oneonta basketball program. Even though she'll be staying close to home, college will still bring some big changes for Beaudoin. The biggest change will be not having her twin sister close by. While Kayla will be just a couple hours from home, her sister will be far away in North Carolina where she'll be dancing at the collegiate level. The separation is something the twins have never experienced. "We grew up together as friends and as sisters," Beaudoin said. "We went through classes together, had hard times and good times."

While competing at SUNY Oneonta, Beaudoin will be studying exercise science on her way to one day becoming a Doctor of Physical Therapy. "Being around sports, unfortunately, comes with injuries. I've sprained both of my ankles," Beaudoin said. "I was interested in the healing process and being able to help people. I know how hard it is to be injured as an athlete." Her father believes her journey is only just beginning. "Kayla's potential is limitless," he said. "I am confident that she will achieve great things."



Congratulations Morgan!
We are so proud of all that you have accomplished. You put your head down and put in the work when no one was watching. You amaze us with your drive, diligence and compassion for others. We look forward to watching you continue to navigate this thing called life. Go Navy, Beat Army!
We love you, Mom, Dad and Jackson



Congratulations Morgan!

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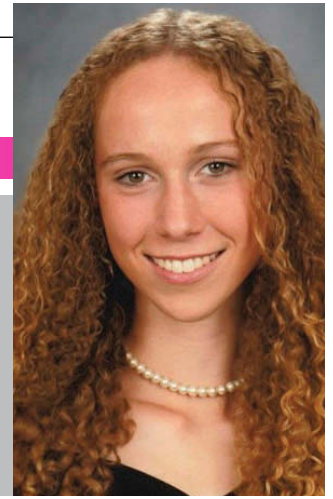
Congratulations Morgan!

Albany Lady Stars plays for scholarships, not trophies.

We are family.



Morgan Brewer **Academy of the Holy Names**



Morgan Brewer is best described by her basketball coach at Academy of the Holy Names, Steven Gigliello. “She is quiet, yet leads by example with her work ethic,” he said. “She is one of the hardest workers I have ever seen.”

If anyone needs evidence of Brewer’s work ethic, the proof is there. She has made all-conference teams in both soccer and basketball and took two bronze medals in the Section 2 track meet. But even with these individual awards, Brewer says it was her teammates that made these moments memorable. “I made first-team Colonial Council my sophomore year – that team means so much to me,” she said. “We were all really close. We played for each other and had senior leaders really impacted me.”

Brewer built off the lessons those leaders taught her as she developed into an impactful leader herself. “Her sense of poise and toughness has shown me the good balance one needs as a leader,” Gigliello said. “Last season, Morgan scorched Broadalbin-Perth with 17 points and 12 rebounds leading Holy Names to a decisive victory in a playoff sectional game, leading AHN to the Class A sectional title game.”

The poise and toughness that Gigliello saw on the basketball court served Brewer well in other areas as well. She started three years as AHN’s center midfielder on the soccer field, a position that coach Teagan Waddingham says “takes a significant amount of fitness, technical skill, and Soccer IQ.” Waddingham said she found all of that and more in Brewer, who she also coached in track. “Usually around the halfway mark of a track race, you see athletes slow down to compensate for the pain they are experiencing, but not Morgan,” she pointed out. “Morgan brings this intensity to competition that encourages everyone else to give everything they have and she works hard daily to maintain this standard of competition.”

It’s clear to everyone around her that Brewer is a hardworking, athletic leader. She says those traits run in her family. “My mom played division

one soccer in North Carolina,” Brewer explained. “My dad was a marine – he was the one who introduced the service academies to me.”

Inspired by her father’s military career and encouragement, Brewer decided she wanted to apply to a service academy. She spent the summer before her senior year attending the West Point Summer Leaders Experience. “That experience made me fall in love with the whole idea of service academies,” Brewer said. “So I applied to West Point, Navy, and the Air Force Academy.”

Brewer found out later that she was accepted into all three of the academies she applied to, leaving her with the difficult decision of which one to attend. “I went out to visit West Point and Navy, but Air Force was a little too far away for me,” she said. “I fell in love with Navy and decided that was the one for me.”

While Brewer says she doesn’t know what she wants to do in the Navy, she currently has her sights set on the skies. “I’m really interested in aviation,” Brewer said. “I’m thinking of becoming a pilot.”

Whatever she decides to pursue, those around Brewer have no doubt she’s on the right path.

“Over the last four years, I have witnessed Morgan in numerous high-pressure situations and she has handled them with hard work and dedication,” said Waddingham. “Her leadership on the soccer field has made everyone around her better, and her training in pursuit of fitness and skill on the track has aided in her decision to serve our country upon attending the US Naval Academy this fall.”



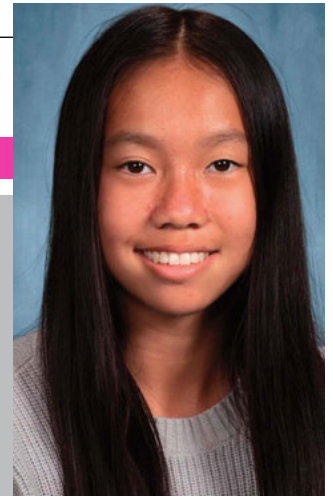
Congratulations Rachel!

Words can't express how proud we are of all you have accomplished. Graduating as valedictorian is an incredible achievement on its own, but doing so while battling through the challenges of an ACL injury shows your grit, strength, and determination. Watching you grow into such a dedicated and passionate athlete is the best gift we can get. We are so excited for your next chapter at MIT!

From
Mom, Dad
and Grady



Rachel Chen
Shenendehowa High School



Rachel Chen said she's played soccer since fourth grade, but has never quite settled on a position. "I started off as a midfielder or a wing," she said. "Sometimes I would play forward, usually attacking center forward, or left or right forward." That versatility would go on to help playing for Shenendehowa High School. "We've developed a style of play at Shenendehowa that means we have to be adaptable," she said. "A lot of us play a lot of different positions, so the position I'm playing is often dependent on the opponent we're playing. I've played almost everywhere offensively."

Her speed and versatility were also an asset in her other sport, track & field. Chen broke school records in the long jump and the 4x55 shuttle hurdle relay, qualifying for state meets multiple times. Chen said she enjoys jumping the most because of how technical the event is. "My favorite event is definitely the long jump because it's not just about speed," she said. "I can make a lot of little adjustments to make my approach better. It's about hitting the board right, getting your steps down, and getting your landing down."

Unfortunately, Chen wasn't able to compete in her favorite event her senior season. A torn ACL that she suffered during soccer season threatened to end her high school athletic career. But Chen was determined to at least get back on the track before graduation. "I started running about three to four months after surgery," she said. "I wasn't cleared to compete, but I could train with the team." Six months to the day after her surgery, Chen returned to competition. She said taking a few months off sports gave her a new perspective. "It made me more determined to chase after my goals," she said. "I wasn't as grateful for the opportunity to compete because I had never gotten an injury before."

Chen will have the opportunity to compete again in college when she studies at MIT. While competing for the track & field team, Chen said she hopes to study mechanical engineering and eventually become an architect.

"I don't have to choose a major until the end of my freshman year," she said. "But I could definitely see myself doing architecture after I interned with a local firm this year."

For as much as Chen studies different soccer tactics and long jumping technique, she applies the same effort to her schoolwork. Chen graduated Shenendehowa as the valedictorian of a class with more than 700 students. She says being a student-athlete actually helped her manage her time better. "Sports helped me be more disciplined," she said. "It increased my time management skills. I would often be coming home late after practice or traveling to meets on the weekends. I really had to learn how to use every little bit of free time I had during lunch, before practice, and after practice."

But as a star athlete and a star student, Chen isn't content to just succeed herself. In her time at Shenendehowa, Chen has taken it upon herself to help her fellow students find success in school and athletics as well. Those around Chen know her as someone who regularly mentored students in their schoolwork as well as in soccer and track & field. "She is a natural leader who inspires her peers with her humility, kindness, and unwavering determination," said Holli Nirsberger, Shenendehowa soccer coach.

Chen said she felt honored that her academic and athletic efforts were recognized in earning this award. "I'm truly honored to receive this award," she said. "Being recognized alongside such inspiring young women means a lot to me and serves as a reminder that the effort I've put in over the years hasn't gone unnoticed. I'm especially grateful to my parents, coaches, teachers, teammates, and friends who have supported me every step of the way."

Congratulations Moira!



From the first day
you stepped onto the
field, it has been a
pleasure watching
you play the game
you love.

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College - Softball

2025

Moira Collins
Hudson Valley Community College



Moira Collins thought she was done with softball. She was injured and ready to hang up her cleats for good. But her old travel coach, Rick Tedisco Jr., who had taken the reins at Hudson Valley Community College, thought she might want to give it one more shot.

"I was transferring to Hudson Valley because I wasn't sure what I wanted to do academically," Collins said. "And Coach Rick was very persistent, texting me and saying 'do you want to join the team?' and 'you always have a spot here.'"

Still, Collins insisted her softball career was over. Finally, after an injury left Tedisco's Hudson Valley squad in need of a pitcher, he decided to try Collins one more time. "I said okay, this time I'll try it out and see if it still hurts to pitch," Collins said. "And it didn't! And ever since that first day back pitching, I haven't had any pain and I've had a lot of fun."

Collins brought the Vikings to new heights with her pitching. Her first season with the team saw the Vikings go 20-10 and reach the region championship series before losing their final two games to Corning. Collins said that failure drove her and her teammates to aim higher the following year. "We knew what it felt like to lose when we knew we could have won," Collins said. "We came back this year knowing what that felt like and how close we were."

In 2025, Hudson Valley got revenge on Corning in the region championship series and was ranked as high as 8th in the NJCAA Coaches Poll, qualifying as the 5th overall seed at nationals with a 23-7 record and a near perfect 16-1 record in the region. Collins was NJCAA Region 3 Player of the Year after she finished with a team-best 14-5 record and 133 strikeouts, placing her second on the all-time strikeout list at Hudson Valley.

Like Collins, Hudson Valley took time away from softball as the college didn't have a season in 2019, 2020, or 2021. But, also like Collins, the Vikings found success once they returned to softball. The team advanced to its first NJCAA Championship tournament since 2015. Collins became just the third Viking ever to be a first-team All-American. "It means a lot to me

for my hard work to be recognized," she said. "You see those lists year after year, and I look at this year's list and think 'wow, that's actually me.'"

"Mo has shown remarkable strength and determination," Tedisco Jr. said. "She has battled through injuries yet has never given up. Her grit and positive mindset have made her a better player and teammate."

Even though Hudson Valley may not have been where Collins imagined herself playing when she was a star for nearby Tamarac High School, she said it was a great opportunity to play in front of her friends and family. "All of my family lives close, and I have a very big extended family," Collins said. "Whenever I had my games, a lot of my family would show up. It was really special that they can come watch me and that they support me as well as they do."

Collins enrolled at Hudson Valley unsure of what she wanted to study and certain that her softball career was over. She leaves the college with a new softball career and a new major. Collins will continue her softball career at Southern Connecticut where she plans to major in biology. "I've always liked science, and then I saw it in action when I was in physical therapy myself," Collins said. "It's really cool to see the science side of recovery and sports and fitness."

A true student-athlete, Collins posted a 4.0 GPA in the very same semester she was setting records and being named an All-American. "I have no doubt that her perseverance, dedication and hard work will allow her to be successful in both academics and sports as she continues at the four-year level," Tedisco Jr. said.

As she sets out for her next step at Southern Connecticut, Collins represents something special to Hudson Valley Athletic Director Justin Hoyt. "I have had the privilege of witnessing Moira's exceptional dedication to athletics, academics, and her community," he said. "She continues to lead by example and represents the best of what Hudson Valley can offer any student-athlete."

Congratulations, Grace!



We are so proud of all that you have achieved in your four years at Siena College. We can't wait to watch you flourish in your next chapter at Albany Medical College.

All our love,
Mom and Dad

Grace Dobrzynski
Siena College



Grace Dobrzynski is the youngest of three siblings. With two older brothers, it's easy to see where she gets her competitive drive from.

"They were a big motivator for me to be practicing at home," she said. "We're lucky to have a big backyard and we had a lacrosse net and a bounce back. We spent so much time back there, and it was quality time for us." Dobrzynski says those backyard practices made her into the player that she is today. "I'm not even afraid to say that it was competitive," she said. "For me, being the only girl in the family, they taught me to be tougher and to be competitive and to be gritty. All of those characteristics of being the younger sibling and being the only girl translated to how I played lacrosse."

All three of the Dobrzynski kids would go on to play in college. Her oldest brother played at the division three level while her other brother played at Bryant. "As competitive as we were, we were also each other's biggest supporters," she said. "It was so fun to go to each other's games in college and be each other's cheerleaders. That was something that was very special between us."

But Grace, the youngest, had the most successful lacrosse career of them all. She was twice named All-MAAC and graduated with 256 points and 174 assists, both totals being the most by any player in Siena history. She did all this while studying biology and was honored as the Siena Female Student-Athlete of the year two years in a row, an award that caught her eye before she even enrolled at the school.

"On my visit, I remember walking into the athletic center at Siena and seeing these life-size murals of the male and female student-athlete of the year. At the time, the female student-athlete of the year was a lacrosse player," she remembered. "I remember thinking, how cool is that? To see that in

the building and know that you had achieved that. In that moment, I never thought that it could be me in the future."

"Balancing a rigorous academic load with the demands of Division I athletics is an extraordinary achievement and speaks to her time management, discipline, and inner drive," added Lori Anttil, associate athletic director at Siena.

Dobrzynski achieved her academic honors while studying biology, which is the reason she chose to attend Siena. "I knew from a very young age I wanted to be a doctor, so I catered my lacrosse search to schools that would give me a clearer path towards med school," she said. "There is literally no possible clearer path than the Siena/Albany Med program. I was able to apply in high school and was accepted to both Siena and Albany Medical College at the same time."

Both of Dobrzynski's parents are doctors who, after seeing their daughter's interest in medicine, were happy to answer questions and encourage her in her studies. "I was able to sit and ask them questions about the science, the lifestyle, and the patient interaction," she said. "I became more interested and infatuated with the profession as a whole. From there, I was 100% certain that's what I wanted to do and I've really never wavered."

Dobrzynski says she was excited to be the latest in a line of Siena athletes who have won this award. "I have known Siena athletes who have received this award before, and they definitely are examples to me of amazing women and examples to the community," she said. "To be in that company is such an honor for me. I'm really proud and happy to be ending my Siena lacrosse career on such a positive note."



CONGRATULATIONS MIRA!



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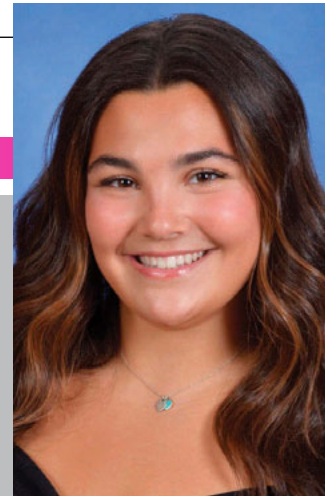
Mira,

We are insanely proud of you. Keep being the incredible advocate, leader and friend to all that you are.

XO –
Mom, Dad
and Max



Mira Ginsburg
Shaker High School



Most athletes receiving the Capital District Sports Women of the Year award come with a long list of other athletic awards. Many are all-conference, all-state, and even all-American. But Mira Ginsburg will be the first to tell you that she is not like those athletes. “I’m not an amazing athlete,” she said. “It’s just not who I am.” But even without the usual cabinet of medals and trophies, Ginsburg has made a dramatic impact on her school and state as a student-athlete.

Ginsburg said she’s always had an interest in sports. “I tried every single sport ever,” she said. “The only one that ever clicked with me was swimming, and that was for a very short period of time.” When presented with a different opportunity to be involved in sports, Ginsburg couldn’t wait to get involved. That opportunity was Unified Basketball, where she would be paired with a fellow student with intellectual disabilities on the court. Spending the season working with her teammate with Down syndrome became a life-changing experience for Ginsburg.

“I don’t know how to explain it, but I had a kind of epiphany,” she said. “I’ve always wanted to do something that helps people with special needs.”

Ginsburg has a unique understanding of those with special needs. She calls it a “very small disability,” but Ginsburg is deaf in her right ear and has been since birth. “I’ve learned how to adapt well to it,” she said. “But a lot of people with more severe disabilities need more support than me. That’s what got me interested in helping them.”

Part of Ginsburg’s effort to adapt to her disability was being her own best advocate. She said she’s had to learn how to speak up when she needs special accommodations. “If I couldn’t hear, I learned to move myself and tell my teacher that I can’t sit here,” she explained. “It’s really hard when I’m driving because, when you’re driving, your right ear is facing the rest of the car. I have to let my friends know that they need to be louder.”

That experience advocating for herself has helped Ginsburg advocate for others. “From the moment she joined our Unified Sports program, Mira made it her mission to ensure that students with intellectual and developmental disabilities felt supported, included, and celebrated,” said Kimberly Murray, Girls Faculty Athletic Manager at Shaker High School.

“Mira has been a driving force behind fostering authentic inclusion through sport, using her platform to champion equity and amplify the voices of

students with intellectual and developmental disabilities,” said Sean Colfer, Shaker athletic director.

Not satisfied to limit the Unified program to just sports, Ginsburg said she started seeking ways to bring a similar program to other parts of her school. “I just had a love for Unified sports and I wanted it to be bigger at our school,” she said. “So I did proposals, connected with people who do this at Special Olympics New York, and worked with our athletics and academics and literally everybody at our school to make it happen.”

The result of these efforts was the Include the Blue club, a club devoted to promoting awareness and inclusion throughout the school. Just as there may be a Unified basketball or bowling team, Ginsburg’s club helped start Unified programs in other disciplines like art, robotics, and 3D printing. “In starting Include the Blue, she has cultivated a culture of empathy, cooperation, and respect—principles she consistently embodies in all that she does,” Colfer said.

After working all through her high school career to establish these inclusive programs, Ginsburg has her sights set on even bigger goals. She’ll first be participating in a gap year internship in Israel where she’ll work with the Special Olympics and Special in Uniform to help with their programs. After that, she plans to attend the University of Connecticut and eventually law school to become a disability advocate. “I really like to see a cause and effect relationship,” she said. “And I like that if something needs to be changed, or somebody needs an extra push, that I could be that person.”

Ginsburg says she’s thankful to be honored among this group of local athletes. “It’s so meaningful to see that someone from unified sports is being recognized in this way,” she said. “It really shows how it has become this program that is looked very highly upon. Yes, it’s a program about inclusion, but it’s also about sports.”

“What sets Mira apart, beyond her leadership and service, is her character,” said Murray. “She approaches every task with empathy, drive, and an unshakable sense of responsibility to others. Her presence on any team brings not only talent and organization, but a profound sense of belonging for all participants. She doesn’t just advocate for inclusion - she lives it, every day.”

"HARDSHIPS OFTEN PREPARE ORDINARY PEOPLE FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY DESTINY."



ANNABELLE GRACE,

you have worked so hard and you are so capable of achieving all that you dream of. We are so proud of you! Keep reaching beyond the stars.



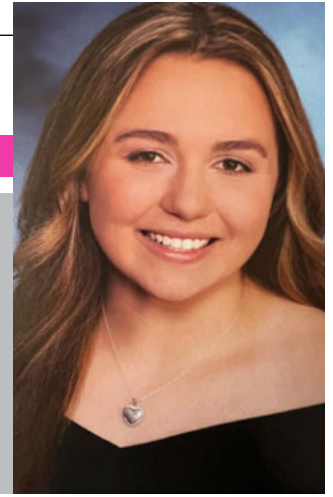
ELEVATE NYBC



**CONGRATULATIONS TO
CLASS OF '25 KAYLA
BEAUDOIN ON YOUR
SELECTION AS ONE OF THE
CAPITAL DISTRICT SPORTS
WOMEN OF THE YEAR**

FROM YOUR ELEVATE NY
BASKETBALL FAMILY!

Annabelle Goyette
Lansingburgh High School



Annabelle Goyette has earned everything she has. There was no other way. There are some sports where being naturally fast or athletically gifted will give you a leg up. But in weightlifting, there's no substitute for hard work over a long period of time.

A friend convinced Goyette to start throwing on the track and field team when she decided to stop playing softball. That turned out to be a great decision. Goyette graduated as the proud owner of two school records in throwing. But before she ever threw a shot put or discus, she had to start in the weight room. Little did she know that training would lead her to break an even bigger, 29-year-old record.

The Top Form Lift-Off competition started in 1992 and continues to pit local high school lifting teams against each other. A few years into the competition, the women's three-lift total record was set at 745 lbs. Between the squat, bench press, and deadlift, Goyette medaled in all three events and turned in a new record total of 750 lbs.

Goyette says she enjoys lifting the most because it's different from most sports. "I'm only competing against myself in lifting," she said. "I feel like people say that for every sport, but with lifting it really is true. In every practice, I'm just competing against myself and just getting a little better each time."

She also says she felt like the lifting community welcomed her with open arms. "The people that are in the community make it easier to want to lift," she said.

Lifting was fun for Goyette. So when she decided to go out for the football team, it was hardly a chore to attend football lifting sessions in the offseason. When the time came for her to strap on the pads, she said her teammates were excited to continue playing with such a dedicated athlete. "When I showed up to get my equipment, the coaches were like 'Oh, Annabelle, you're suiting up? You're playing? Is this happening?'"

Her coaches noticed her hard work as well. "Annabelle was one of our most consistent scholar athletes," said Jeffrey Pasinella, Head Varsity Football Coach at Lansingburgh High School. "She never missed a single workout or

practice. She is a very disciplined individual with great work ethic, and most importantly is a team player."

These days, it's rare but not unheard of to see a female on a high school football team. But almost all of them are kickers or specialists. Goyette broke the mold when she lined up as both a defensive and offensive lineman. Her hard work took her all the way to the Capital District Chapter of the National Football Hall of Fame.

"Playing football was honestly one of the best experiences of my life. It was awesome and terrifying, but just really fun. Getting to know the linemen in practice was great and being a linebacker is so much fun."

Goyette's incredible work ethic extends into the classroom as well. She graduated third in the Lansingburgh class of 2025 and achieved High Honor Roll in every quarter of her high school career. She often felt like her schoolwork paled in comparison to the effort needed for all her lifting, throwing, and football.

"I would go to football practice, go to the weight room, all these places where I knew I was challenging myself. Then I would go home and do a lot at night, but I had that confidence that I built through the day. I already took on practice and the weight room, so going home and getting my homework done, that's the easy part."

Goyette wants to become a physical therapist in the future and will start that journey this fall at Binghamton. She wants to work with football players and other athletes, with a goal of eventually working with professional athletes. "I know how much I love my sports and how much it stings when you have an injury or something hurts," she said. "I want to be the person to help athletes through those experiences."

Dallas Foard, Goyette's Track and Field coach, said he enjoyed the "unique opportunity to watch Annabelle grow as a student athlete, a leader and a strong, independent young woman."



Reeley

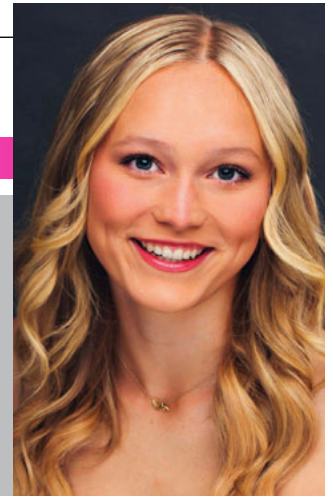


Congratulations on all of your accomplishments throughout high school! We can't wait to watch you chase your dreams and reach for the stars in the future!

Love,
Thom Dad &
Kellan



Keeley Kristel
Scotia-Glenville High School



Sports have always been a part of life for Keeley Kristel. She's been playing softball and basketball since she was five years old. She said she had a tough time deciding what her favorite sport was. "I went back and forth between softball and basketball for a long time," Kristel said.

For most of her life, Kristel was so successful that she didn't need to decide. She led Scotia-Glenville High School in three sports: volleyball, basketball, and softball. Kristel was named a Foothills all-star in all three sports while also serving as a leader to her teammates. "What truly distinguishes Keeley is her character," said Marcella Tebbano, the athletic director at Scotia-Glenville. "She is a natural leader who uplifts those around her."

Eventually, Kristel decided to pursue softball as her top sport. "I felt like I had a lot more of a drive for it," she said. "I was very passionate about playing, and I found comfort in pitching." Even at a difficult position like pitcher, Kristel says she doesn't often get anxious when in the circle. "It's something I'm very comfortable with," she said. "I like being in control."

That comfort in the pitcher's circle served her well. She pitched her way to three straight Foothills 1st team all-star selections and two MVPs. She'll even make the jump to pitching in college when she heads to Springfield College next year, a place she says uniquely suits her affinity for athletics. "It's a very sports-oriented school," Kristel said. "That's a lot of what I have done growing up, so the campus felt great for me."

But even with all the accolades she's gathered in her softball career, Kristel's biggest impact on the softball field came when she had the chance to share the circle with a special guest.

Kristel connected with a substitute teacher named Mrs. Dutelle. Mrs. Dutelle also played high school softball, coached in local youth leagues, and had a daughter currently playing in the youth leagues as well. A connection formed quickly as the two bonded over their love for softball.

Later that year, Mrs. Dutelle suffered a pulmonary embolism. Kristel reached out to her softball coach and started brainstorming with her to find anything she could do to help.

Kristel started working on a fundraiser at the beginning of the school year. Her first idea was a youth clinic, but it would have been too late in the season to host an event outdoors. With more time to plan, Kristel and her coach decided on something even bigger. The two planned a season-opening tournament hosted by the Scotia-Glenville varsity team as a fundraiser for Mrs. Dutelle. They enlisted local youth players to make raffle items and operate the concession stand to raise additional funds. "We wanted to do something to raise awareness and help her family," Kristel said. "So we made ribbons and had a whole tournament out of it."

Before the first game, Kristel got to show Mrs. Dutelle's daughter to the place she felt most comfortable: the pitcher's circle. For just a moment, Kristel was able to offer another player the chance to feel that same comfort she feels when she's pitching.

In the end, Kristel and the SGHS softball team raised over \$4,000 for the Dutelle family. "It was honestly a blessing", Kristel said. "I think everybody heard what happened, and they were so supportive and wanted to help their family as much as they could."

Kristel expressed her excitement to join such a special group of women who have been awarded the CDSWOY.

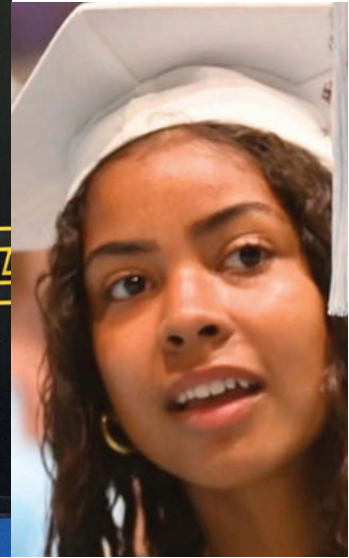
"Becoming a winner of the Capital District Sportswoman of the Year Award has been amazing," she said. "To see the accomplishments of the other recipients and to realize I am now a part of such an inspiring group is truly flattering."

Alivia Landy



*Congratulations!
We love you.*

*Mom, Dad
and Anthony*



Congratulations, Kayla!



We are so proud of your hard work and determination, and greatly appreciate your many years of support for our Walk to End Epilepsy.

Best of luck in your future endeavors.

Alivia Landy
Columbia High School



Alivia Landy says she's been playing basketball since she was six years old. But that was just organized basketball. The sport has deep roots in her family and created numerous childhood memories between her and her twin brother.

Throughout her childhood, there was always a basketball hoop around the Landy house. From the small plastic hoop in the house to the quintessential driveway hoop that hosted many brother/sister matchups, basketball was and still is a constant in the Landy house. "That's where my drive to win and hatred to lose comes from," Landy said. "I always want to do the best I can and leave everything on the court."

Landy says her parents used basketball to teach her the value of hard work. "My parents have always told me that if I work hard, I'll get what I want," Landy said. All that work has paid off for Landy, who certainly got what she wanted out of the game. She scored over 1,000 points for Columbia High School, finished with the second-most points and rebounds in school history, and set school records in games played, free throws made, and free throw shooting percentage. She was named a First Team Suburban Council All-Star, and following her senior year, was named First Team NYS All State, First Team Times Union All Star, and MVP of the Suburban Council All-Star team.

"Alivia is the single best athlete I've coached in 30 years of being a basketball coach of both boys and girls," said Shay Harrison, Columbia varsity girls basketball coach. "She is also one of the three or four most intense competitors I've coached. This combination has enabled her to create an indelible mark on the Columbia girls basketball program."

That work ethic was evident in other sports as well. Landy was also Third Team NYS All-State in volleyball and the Section 2 Player of the Year in flag football. While she played and excelled at three different sports in high school, Landy says that nothing compares to her love for basketball. "I could be around basketball my whole life and never get bored of it. No one has ever had to tell me to train for basketball, and that's how I know basketball is my favorite sport."

Landy also took the opportunity to coach her favorite sport. She volunteered as a student coach for the Unified basketball team, giving her the chance to share what she's learned on the court with other players. "I thought it'd be interesting to be a coach for basketball. Once I got involved in Unified basketball, I really enjoyed working with the kids and teaching them what I know. That showed me that I like coaching basketball almost as much as I like playing it."

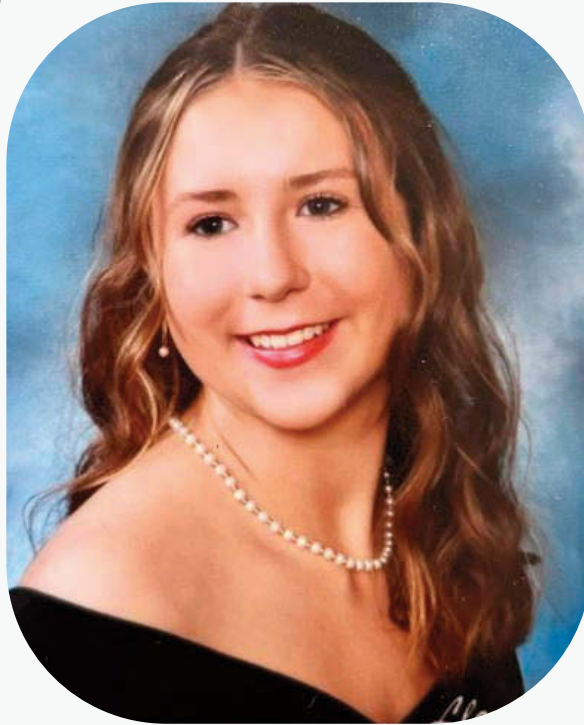
Landy's hard work isn't just limited to the athletic sphere. She is a member of the National Honor Society and graduated with a 95.5 final rank weighted average. This fall, Landy will head to Staten Island to study at Wagner College and compete on the basketball team. While taking on the new challenge of NCAA Division I basketball, she will also be studying nursing in preparation for a career in medicine.

"I really just want to work in the medical field," Landy said. "I couldn't do the PA program while playing basketball, so I chose the nursing program. I still want to go to medical school after I finish my undergraduate degree."

At the heart of Landy's motivation to study medicine is a desire to help. "I like being in an environment where people are helping people who are at their lowest," she said.

Alivia Landy's desire to work hard and help people is evident in both her athletic career and personal life. It's why coach Harrison summarized Landy as "everything you can ask for in a star player: driven, passionate about winning, intelligent both on and off the court, receptive to all manner of coaching from X's and O's to mental preparation, a vocal leader, a supporter of all her teammates regardless of their role on the team, conscientious in her responsibilities, and to top it off a really good person."

Congratulations Larissa Lee!



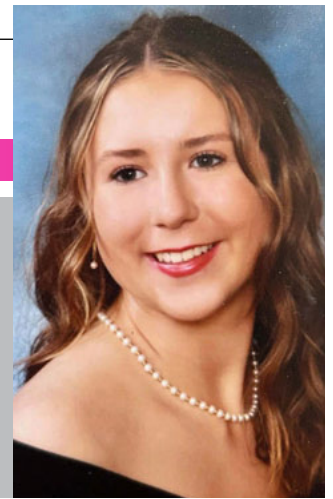
**Capital District Sports Women of the Year
Scholastic Award Recipient 2025**



La Salle Institute
ESTABLISHED 1850

Remember...YOU are La Salle!

Larissa Lee
La Salle Institute



The first day of high school is enough to make even the most confident student feel nervous. But for Larissa Lee and other girls who made up the first female class at La Salle Institute, their historic moment came with extra worries. "It was kind of scary," Lee said. "But it was also really cool to be a part of something bigger."

Being the first females at a formerly all-boys school meant that every girls team was new. Starting athletic teams from scratch is a challenge. "It was really tough," Lee said. "The first soccer team had a good group of girls playing, but it was tough because we had girls on the team who had never played soccer before."

Despite facing teams with older and more experienced players, Lee captained a team that came together to compete with their advantaged opponents. "We all came together," she said. "It was really cool to do it together. We formed a good friendship and had a lot of fun."

Surrounded by new faces, Lee took it upon herself to become a leader. She was the captain of the softball team all four years and the soccer team for three years. "I became a leader on the sports teams and in the school community," Lee said. "So I took on a lot of leadership roles in the band, in various clubs and definitely on the sports field."

The softball MVP was also recognized as the La Salle Institute's top student. Lee was named valedictorian following graduation. She was also president of her school's National Honor Society chapter, the Spanish Club,

and an Executive Officer of Symphonic and Jazz Bands. An accomplished musician, Lee plays the flute and tenor saxophone as part of a jazz band that took third at the National Jazz Festival.

As a child of a Ukrainian father, Lee grew up going to a Ukrainian school, doing Ukrainian dance, and attending a Ukrainian church. So when Ukraine was under attack, Lee took it upon herself to find ways to mobilize her own community to help another. She sold pins, planned fundraisers, and helped collect, sort, and package supplies for Ukrainian soldiers and refugees. "With my Ukrainian heritage, I felt very strongly and wanted to support those people," Lee said. "I was happy to share that with my school community as well."

Lee will stay close to home for her next chapter while focusing on building homes. She's set to attend Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and study residential architecture.

Among all the honors and accolades that Larissa Lee earned throughout her athletic and academic career at La Salle Institute, none represent her as well as the Monica Bentley Memorial Award. The award is given annually to a student-athlete at La Salle that is outgoing and caring to others on their teams. Whether working with the softball team, the jazz band, or volunteers raising money for people overseas, Lee is a natural leader who cares deeply for those around her, actively looking for opportunities to lock arms with others and get the job done.



CONGRATULATES

LEAH
MADORE

Capital District



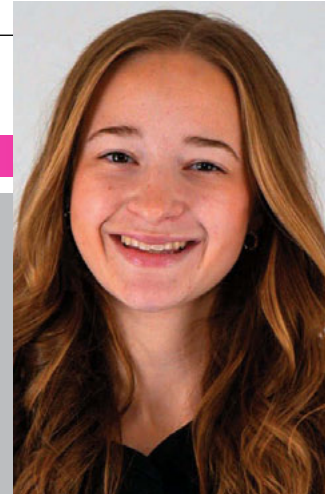
Sports Women of the Year

CLASS OF 2025

#SAGENATION



Leah Madore
Russell Sage College



Ask anyone who's spent any time around the diamond, and they'll tell you that softball is a sport that requires a strong mind. Pitching is probably the most mentally challenging part of the game. Leah Madore agrees. "Pitching is a very mental position," she said. "You have to maintain composure through some tough moments and when things don't go your way. You're also in the middle of the field. So everybody, especially your team, is kind of watching you and relying on you."

It may not come as a surprise then that Madore, an accomplished pitcher for Russell Sage, is also a strong psychology student. Madore was given the Phyllis Van Fleet Award for excellence in Psychology while holding a 3.9 GPA. High academics are never easy to achieve when playing a sport at the college level. "I've learned to prioritize things that come first over others," Madore said. "Balancing exams with work and fun while also making time for softball and extracurriculars, I had to know what comes first and when."

Madore said the Russell Sage Women's Institute is what initially drew her to choose to attend the college. The program works with female students at RSC to develop leadership skills through a feminist lens. "We do a lot of volunteering and we welcome guest speakers to talk about some really cool topics," Madore said. One of those volunteer projects was a bra drive in partnership with "I Support the Girls," an organization that helps women experiencing poverty, homelessness, domestic violence, and other hardships.

Madore also volunteered with Every Campus a Refuge, a program that pairs college students with local refugees. As a part of this program, Madore was a welcoming presence for a family of seven from Afghanistan. "Leah went to the airport after midnight on a Friday to meet and greet a refugee family," said Russell Sage athletic director Jim Lyons. "She brought them snacks, water and a much-needed car seat. She wanted to make sure that their first experience in our country was a positive one." "She helped socialize the three young boys—under the age of twelve—by including them in local community events, assisting in teaching English, and providing overall childcare," added RSC Softball Head Coach Stephanie Reinhardt. "Through these efforts, Leah not only supported the family's integration into the community but also gained valuable insight into cultural awareness and compassion."

In addition to these volunteer projects, Madore also was an Academic Peer tutor for two years and was selected to be the President of the Psychology Club on campus. "It's hard to imagine someone being able to excel in athletics when you see the time Leah spends during the week on her academics and her community outreach efforts," said Lyons. "Leah has done just that during her three seasons as a Gator Softball Pitcher."

Madore managed her time well. On top of her academic honors, she pitched her way to the top of the Russell Sage record book. She graduated as the career leader in strikeouts and top three in appearances, wins, complete games, and innings pitched. She did all this in just three years at RSC, one less than most student athletes. Of course, no one on the softball field can do it alone. "Having support from my team has been really important," Madore said, "And having a strong mental game is really important as well."

In the summer of 2024, Madore was given the Nancy Parker Neumann Travel Award to support her desire to travel to a different place and work on a social justice issue. She chose to travel to Spartanburg, South Carolina to work at the Spartanburg Area Mental Health Center. "I focused on doing an internship in Spartanburg so I could get to a different part of the country," Madore said. "I wanted to experience a different type of American culture."

Madore will experience an entirely different part of the country this fall as well as she plans to attend the University of Denver as a part of their clinical mental health counseling master's program. She'll look to graduate from Denver as a licensed mental health counselor.

As she looks ahead to her next experience in the Rocky Mountains, Madore can't help but be grateful for her time at Russell Sage. "I'm thankful to the athletic director, Jim Lyons, and the coaching staff for their support of my academic endeavors alongside my athletic career. Their support allowed me to succeed at Russell Sage."



Allie

We are incredibly proud
of you!

Keep on:
Loving deeply
Playing hard
Never settling

With love,
Mom, Dad, Mattie,
and JP

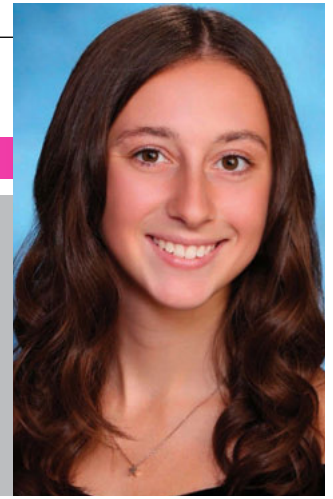


CONGRATULATES

GRACE DOBRZYNSKI

2025 CAPITAL DISTRICT SPORTS WOMEN OF THE YEAR HONOREE

Allie O'Rourke
Burnt Hills - Ballston Lake High School



Competition is what drives Allie O'Rourke. Even as a young child, she set herself apart from her peers for her intense desire to win. "In elementary school, Allie knew she wanted to win," said Megan James, Head Cross Country and Indoor Track & Field coach at Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake High School. "Her fierce competitive nature was evident at our district field day events."

The first sport to capture O'Rourke's competitive spirit was field hockey. She said her best friend wanted to play and needed a friend to play with, so O'Rourke joined her. Over time, they found others in their community that would later come together to create a dynasty.

"We've been on the same team and playing together since we were in second, third or even first grade for some of the girls," she said. This group of girls was special. O'Rourke and her team made the NYS Section 2 Class B finals four years in a row, taking home three championships. They captured Class B regional titles three years and two Class B state championships.

"We all had a special connection," O'Rourke said. "We passed really well and we knew where each other were going to be. We all communicated well because we are all good friends. I think that really helped us."

O'Rourke was twice named all-state in field hockey and was the Times Union Player of the Year in her senior year, but that elementary schooler that Coach James noticed at field day did more than just field hockey. Thanks again to the influence of her friends, O'Rourke joined James' track & field program.

"When I first joined track in seventh grade, I was mostly doing it for fun and to be with my friends," she said. "But a lot of the girls wanted to be distance runners. The more I ran distance, the more I absolutely hated it. I decided I did not want to run anything longer than two laps, so that's how I ended up running the 800."

Running a middle distance event like the 800 meter takes strategy and awareness of the other runners. That's where her competitive nature gives her an edge. "I usually try to pace off of the people in my race," O'Rourke says. "I'm not really a person that can run a fast time by myself. Winning races is more what I do."

"Like many athletes from all levels and all sports, Allie has moments of self-doubt," said James. "But by and large, she is not afraid to take a risk, and that often amounts to something great."

That "something great" includes more local, state, and national recognitions than any athlete has ever earned at Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake. O'Rourke completed her high school career with nine school records and two Section 2 records. Along with a long list of sectional championships, she was a three-time All-American at the New Balance National meets.

When she's not competing, O'Rourke spends her free time teaching others about the sports she loves. She coaches field hockey and track and field teams and organizes field hockey camps and tournaments in the local community. "She volunteers to coach our youth teams when we're in need of varsity role models," said Kelly Vrooman, Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake High School's field hockey coach. "She sets a great example for the next generation."

Clearly an accomplished athlete, O'Rourke is also an academic role model for young athletes. She achieved high honor roll for three years, was a member of three honor societies, and graduated with an Advanced Regents Diploma with BHBL Merit Seal. For her athletic and academic performance, she was a recipient of the scholastic award from the Greater Capital Region Track & Field and Cross Country Hall of Fame.

O'Rourke will join the Penn State track & field team in the fall, a program that boasts double-digit Olympic medalists and over 500 all-Americans. As Allie O'Rourke heads to State College looking to join those athletes that have gone before her, Coach James has additional goals for her: to always be happy to be there, to be in it, and to have the opportunity to compete in something that you love.

"Allie is a phenomenal athlete who is committed to creating a sustainable path for longevity in her sport," James said. "I truly believe she is one of the most outstanding athletes we have in the Capital Region."



CONGRATULATIONS

AVA POUPARD

Capital District Sports Women of the Year

Collegiate Award Recipient

FROM UALBANY ATHLETICS

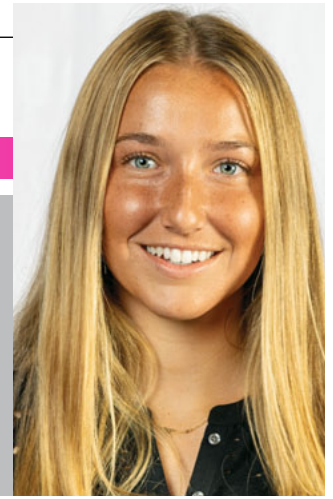
UKNOW

Congratulations Keeley!



From the Scotia-Glenville Athletic Department and All Sports Booster Club

Ava Poupard
University at Albany



Ava Poupard says lacrosse is ubiquitous to the Poupard family. “Lacrosse runs in my family,” she said. “My dad played at Delaware and my older sister played all the way through high school.”

Poupard said her dad had both Ava and her sister playing lacrosse from a young age. Ava herself has been holding a stick since she was three years old. She went on to have a successful career at Rumson Fair Haven Regional High School where she scored 78 goals and 22 assists. This performance caught the attention of a few colleges, but Poupard said UAlbany was an easy choice.

“I chose UAlbany because I really loved the lacrosse community,” she said. “It’s rare to see such a strong community - from the young kids all the way up. I also loved my coaches.”

Poupard helped the Great Danes capture two America East regular season titles and two America East tournament championships. She finished her career with 76 goals and 22 assists. Even after all these years, Poupard says lacrosse is still something she loves. “Lacrosse has always brought me happiness,” she said. “I tell others to remember your love for the game. Remember your passion for the game.”

Scoring double-digit goals each year of her collegiate career is certainly a testament to Poupard’s athleticism, but she considers her mental training more important than her physical training. “I’ve always been taught that taking care of the mental part of the game is more important than the physical part,” she said. “Everyone wants to be the fastest player on the field or have the best shot, but I was aware at a young age that you need a good headspace to do anything.”

While Poupard studied and graduated with a business major, she minored in Psychology. She said mental health has always been of interest to her, especially when it came to sports. So when she heard about a new

non-profit called The Hidden Opponent, which was being founded to break the stigma of mental health in athletics, she was excited to get involved.

“Once I heard about The Hidden Opponent, I jumped right in,” she said. “I founded our chapter of The Hidden Opponent and we started doing mental health awareness games.”

Poupard says that too many of her fellow athletes have never worked on the mental aspect of their sports. While daily practices and drills are mandatory and expected, most mental health training is optional if offered at all. When athletes get involved with The Hidden Opponent, Poupard says many are surprised at how helpful and effective these trainings can be.

“I get a lot of student-athletes that say things like ‘thank you so much’ and ‘I didn’t realize how important this was.’”

After serving as a leader in The Hidden Opponent and UAlbany lacrosse for a few years, Poupard has now graduated and works for Beakon, a security technology company. But her work with The Hidden Opponent has made an impact on her campus and student-athletes across the country. Poupard said she’s proud of the impact she’s had. “The fact that others are now willing to speak up about these things is what brings me joy,” she said. “It’s so important to show other student-athletes that these resources exist.”

Poupard says she’s thankful to receive this award and credits her entire support system for the things she’s accomplished.

“It means the world to be recognized for my work on and off the field,” she said. “I wouldn’t be getting this award without my coaches, family, teammates, trainers, and other staff. I could name a million people - my support system is so good.”

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Liz Bishop, a broadcast icon and a beloved anchor and reporter in the Capital Region, will receive the Capital District Sports Women of the Year Appreciation Award at the CDSWOY Awards Gala on August 4, 2025.

She will receive the award at the GE Theatre at Proctors. For decades, Liz graced the Proctors Main Stage as a host of the Melodies of Christmas, raising millions of dollars for childhood cancer research. She was also a long-time host of the MDA Telethon and has served on the Board of Directors of the Empire State Youth Orchestra.

Liz Bishop's journey at CBS6 began in 1973, while still attending the University at Albany. Hired as a weekend sportscaster - a rarity for women in the field at the time - Liz quickly proved herself as a versatile and courageous journalist. Her career would go on to include a wide array of assignments, ultimately earning her a place among the most respected and recognizable figures in the Capital Region.

Having grown up in the Albany area, her deep connection with viewers, relentless pursuit of the truth, and unwavering commitment to community-focused journalism have defined her decades of service.

Liz was part of what is widely recognized as the first all-woman newscast, and, after Sports Illustrated reporter Melissa Ludtke won the right to become the first female reporter to enter the New York Yankees' locker room, Liz and other female reporters proudly walked in Ludtke's footsteps. Her career has been punctuated by countless historic moments - including broadcasting the first transcontinental live remote in the Capital Region during the inauguration of George Deukmejian of Menands as Governor of California as well as being at Ground Zero, covering the New York search and rescue team after 9/11.

Liz's influence reaches beyond news. In 2016, she was inducted into the New York State Broadcasters' Hall of Fame, and her interview with then-Senate candidate Hillary Clinton was even featured on The Late Show with David Letterman.

Throughout her career, Liz has earned an impressive array of accolades. Her reporting on the Schoharie Limousine crash along with the CBS6 investigative team earned the station a national Edward R. Murrow Award.

She's been part of five Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards, a recipient of three New York State Emmy awards, dozens of Emmy nominations, and multiple New York State Associated Press Broadcast Awards for General Excellence in Reporting. Equally important are her extensive contributions to the community - as a telethon host, emcee, board member, and campaign chair for numerous local causes.

"We are honored to present Liz Bishop with our Appreciation Award," said Eric McDowell, President of CDSWOY. "Liz is truly a role model to our remarkable young women. She was a trailblazer in her field and paved the way for many women in broadcasting today. Like our recipients, she shows what dedication, determination, dignity and love of your community can lead to. As our honorees strive for greatness in their chosen fields, they can look to Liz Bishop as an example of what they can accomplish both personally and professionally."



Previous CDSWOY Appreciation Award Recipients

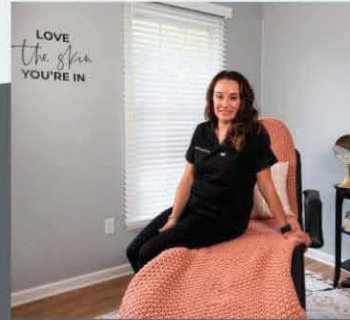
2021 – Jim Schiltz, *Daily Gazette*

2023 – Ed Dopp, *Section 2 Executive Director*

2024 – The College of Saint Rose (*accepted by Lori Anctil, Director of Athletics*)

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ANGELINA VALENTE

Thank you to CDSWOY for having me back this year! And congrats to all of the women being represented. You're all such incredible humans and I'm honored to be here to celebrate you tonight.



*find
more
here*



CAPITAL DISTRICT
**SPORTS WOMEN
OF THE YEAR**

MOIRA COLLINS



Congratulations, Mo!
From HVCC Athletics



Emma Baccellieri, a staff writer at Sports Illustrated, is tonight's virtual speaker at the 2025 Capital District Sports Women of the Year Awards Gala.

Baccellieri has been a staff writer at Sports Illustrated since 2018. She has written for the magazine about everything from chess to sandlot baseball to competitive lifesaving—but much of her favorite work is centered on women's sports. She received an honorable mention for the first-ever Billie Jean King Award for Excellence in Women's Sports Coverage in 2024, with a portfolio including coverage of softball, basketball and soccer. Baccellieri has discussed her work and commented on women's sports on television venues such as PBS NewsHour and the BBC.

Earlier in her career, Baccellieri's work focused on baseball. She has written for six editions of The New York Times-bestselling Baseball Prospectus Annual, covered five World Series, and received several awards from the Society of American Baseball Research. She is the author of the forthcoming Court Queens: The Rise and Reign of Women's Basketball, a photographic history of the sport that will be released by Hachette next March. Baccellieri is a graduate of Duke University and lives in Washington, D.C.

"We are blessed that Emma will be speaking to our recipients and their families and friends at this year's Awards Gala," said Eric McDowell, President of CDSWOY. "Her enjoyable prose at major events and her engaging features with Sports Illustrated provide inspiration to our award winners. We appreciate her time and look forward to her thoughts."

Previous CDSWOY virtual guest speakers include Christine Plonsky of the University of Texas, Tara VanDerveer of Stanford University, Olympic Gold Medalist Lindsey Jacobellis, Jessica Mendoza of ESPN and Lisa Bluder of the University of Iowa.



Previous CDSWOY Guest Speakers



2020
Chris Plonsky
University of Texas



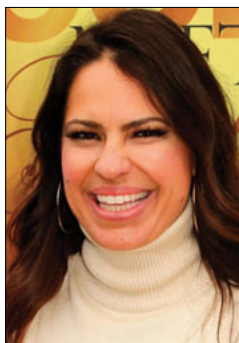
2021
Tara VanDerveer
Stanford University



2024
Lisa Bluder
University of Iowa



2022
Lindsey Jacobellis
Olympic Gold Medalist



2023
Jessica Mendoza
ESPN

Congratulations to the
Capital District Sports Women of the Year
Class of 2025



A Special Shout Out to

2025

Kayla Beaudoin

We are so proud of all
your accomplishments!

The Tamarac Booster Club



Congratulations to the
Capital District Sports Women of the Year
Class of 2025



A Special Shout Out to

Kayla Beaudoin

We are so proud of all your accomplishments!

We look forward to cheering you on at Oneonta!

**Tamarac Friends of Girls Basketball &
Tamarac Friends of Girls Volleyball**

Previous CDSWOY Award Recipients



2024 Grand Recipients: Katie Pascale, University at Albany and Ariana Dingley, Lansingburgh High School



2022 Grand Recipients: Colleen Quaglia of The College of Saint Rose and Michelina Lombardi of Averill Park High School

2024 GRAND COLLEGIATE WOMAN OF THE YEAR:

Katie Pascale, University at Albany

2024 GRAND SCHOLASTIC WOMAN OF THE YEAR:

Ariana Dingley, Lansingburgh High School

The other members of the CDSWOY Class of 2024:

Kate Ackerman, Maple Hill High School

Leoni Griffin, Shaker High School

Taylor Holohan, Averill Park High School

Carly King, Guilderland High School

Amber Kolpakas, Galway High School

Cassidy McClement, Waterford-Halfmoon High School

Isabella Miller, Fonda-Fultonville High School

Mackenna Roberson, Hoosick Falls High School

Talia Spenziero, Siena College

Amy Stevens, Russell Sage College

Kennedy Swedick, The Albany Academies

2022 GRAND COLLEGIATE WOMAN OF THE YEAR:

Colleen Quaglia, The College of Saint Rose

2022 GRAND SCHOLASTIC WOMAN OF THE YEAR:

Michelina Lombardi, Averill Park High School

The other members of the CDSWOY Class of 2022:

Brigid Duffy, Queensbury High School

Katie Falotico, University at Albany

Rebecca Hall, Maple Hill High School

Grace Heiting, Union College

Kelsey Meca, Mayfield High School

Zionna Perez-Tucker, Mohonasen High School

Carlie Rzeszotarski, Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake High School

Heather Schmidt, Niskayuna High School

Cameryn Shultes, Middleburgh High School

Ayaka Suesada, Hawthorne Valley Waldorf School

Sadie Tavares, Schuylerville High School



2023 Grand Recipients: Hannah Price of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Kara Bacon of Warrensburg High School



2021 Grand Recipients: Clare Howard of Taconic Hills High School and Hallie Klosterman of Russell Sage College

2023 GRAND COLLEGIATE WOMAN OF THE YEAR:

Hannah Price, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

2023 GRAND SCHOLASTIC WOMAN OF THE YEAR:

Kara Bacon, Warrensburg High School

The other members of the CDSWOY Class of 2023:

Amanda Chambers, University at Albany

Emma Crahan, Fonda-Fultonville High School

Rylee Dunbar, Corinth High School

Isabella Franchi, Colonie High School

Rachael Frazier, Maple Hill High School

Emily Frost, Tamarac High School

Addyson Galuski, Waterford-Halfmoon High School

Kayla Grant, Lake George High School

Zoey Lints, Schoharie High School

Olivia Lomascolo, Siena College

Grace O'Brien, Galway High School

2021 GRAND COLLEGIATE WOMAN OF THE YEAR:

Hallie Klosterman, Russell Sage College

2021 GRAND SCHOLASTIC WOMAN OF THE YEAR:

Clare Howard, Taconic Hills High School

The other members of the CDSWOY Class of 2021:

Naseyah Dix, Bryant & Stratton College

Phoebe Fox, Glens Falls High School

Riley Gibbons, Germantown High School

Jenna Hoffman, Maple Hill High School

Beth Irwin, Guilderland High School

Anna Jankovic, Averill Park High School

Sara Langworthy, Warrensburg High School

Isabella Mancini, Galway High School

Madison Reyes, Mayfield High School


Kate Sherman, Mohonasen High School



2020 Grand Recipients: Lydia Ware of Averill Park High School and Morgan Burchardt of The College of Saint Rose

- 2020 GRAND COLLEGIATE WOMAN OF THE YEAR:
Morgan Burchardt, The College of Saint Rose
- 2020 GRAND SCHOLASTIC WOMAN OF THE YEAR:
Lydia Ware, Averill Park High School
- The other members of the CDSWOY Class of 2020:
Liz Brady, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
MacKenzie Brown, Rensselaer High School
Amelia Canetto, Taconic Hills High School
Morgan Fish, Fort Edward High School
Megan Flynn, The Sage Colleges
Rachel Hunsicker, Lake George High School
Brytney Moore, Northville High School
Brooke Pickett, Stillwater High School
Makenzie Terrell, Middleburgh High School
Lauren Willis, South Glens Falls High School
Rachel Wnuk, Galway High School

Read all about our all-time recipients at CDSWOY.COM.








CONGRATULATIONS ALIVIA LANDY!



~ CAPITAL DISTRICT SPORTS WOMEN OF THE YEAR ~

**THE COLUMBIA HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT
CONGRATULATES ALIVIA LANDY ON BEING SELECTED TO THE
CAPITAL DISTRICT SPORTS WOMEN OF THE YEAR CLASS OF 2025!**

-VOLLEYBALL-BASKETBALL-FLAG FOOTBALL-

2024 CDSWOY Awards Photo Gallery



The CDSWOY Class of 2024: (Back row): Kate Ackerman, Ariana Dingley, Leonna Griffin, Carly King, Cassidy McClement, Isabella Miller. (Front row): Katie Pascale, MacKenna Roberson, Talia Spenziero, Amy Stevens, Kennedy Swedick. Missing: Taylor Holohan, Amber Kolpakas.



N.Y. State Sen. James Tedisco provided his remarks and proclamations to the recipients.



Leonna Griffin of Shaker HS.



Kennedy Swedick of The Albany Academies.



Grand Collegiate honoree Katie Pascale of UAlbany and Grand Scholastic honoree Ariana Dingley of Lansingburgh HS.

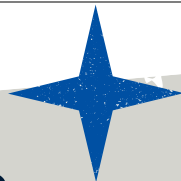
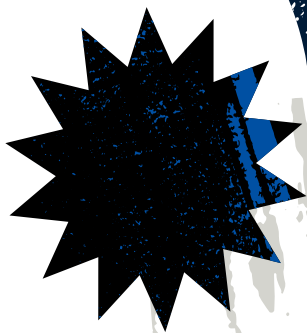


Carly King of Guilderland HS with her family.



Ashley Miller served as the MC.

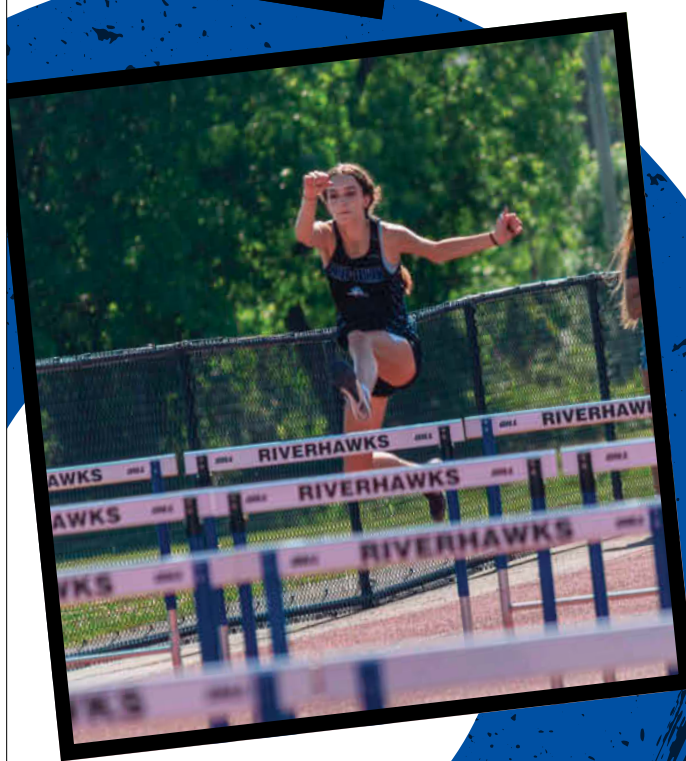
See the entire galleries of all previous events at CDSWOY.COM.
Photos by Christina Primero Photography.



Congrats, Jessica Baeckmann

on being named one of the
Capital District Sports Women of the Year

Class of 2025

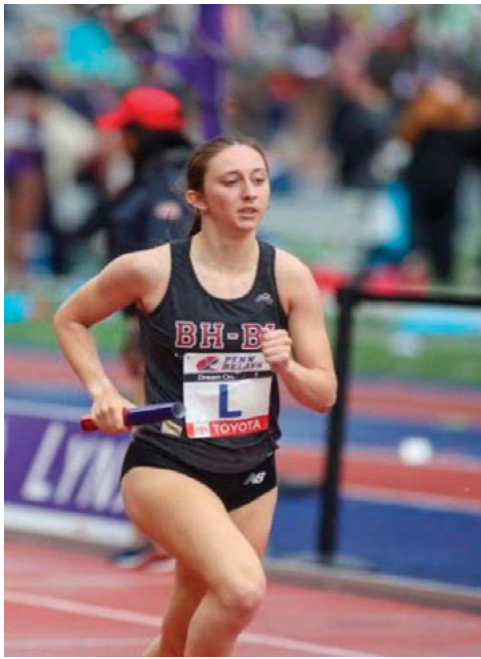


We are proud of your
many accomplishments!

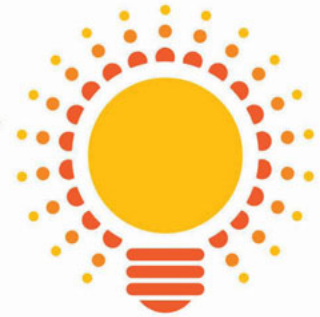
Let's Go Mustangs!
The Cairo-Durham Booster Club



Congratulations Allie O'Rourke!!



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