

Top students recognized at DGS, DGN

Several residents are among those named in the top 2 percent of the graduating classes of Community High School District 99. Fifteen students achieved the honor at Downers Grove South, and 11 were recognized at Downers Grove North.

Downers Grove South

Henry Gillam is the son of Michael and Rosen Gillam of Woodridge. He has been recognized as an Illinois State Scholar (12).

During his four years at South, Henry has participated in several activities. While a freshman, he was a part of Blueprint's Pony Express. He has been a member of South's Math Team (9, 11, 12) and Scholastic Bowl (9, 10, 12). He has participated in Seminars for Scholars (11, 12), the Young Democrats Club (11), and Students for a Free Tibet (9, 10).

Athletically, Henry has been a member of South's Golf Team (9, 10). He also has worked as a caddy each summer at local golf clubs.

Henry's community interest has been focused on volunteer work at Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital (11).

He plans to attend Georgetown University, majoring in international political economics.

Gregory Go, the son of Raymond and Ria Gouttama of Woodridge, is a member of the National Honor Society (11, 12). He has received the Washington University in St. Louis Book Award (11), the Academic Award Letter (9-12), and both the Silver Mathematics Award (10) and the Gold Mathematics Award (11). He has been recognized as an Illinois State Scholar (12) and a National Merit Scholarship Finalist (12).

Gregory has been involved in numerous student activities. He has been a valuable member of Math Team (9-12). He was a member of the Math Team's West Suburban Conference All-Academic Team (9). He was named a Continental Math League Schoolwide High Scorer in Calculus (10). He has been an American Invitational Mathematics Examination Qualifier (9-12) and was named an American Mathematics Contest 12 Schoolwide High Scorer (10, 12). He earned first place in school at grade level in the Illinois Math League (9, 10) and in the Atlantic-Pacific Math Contest (9, 10). At Math Team Conference he earned first place individually (9, 10). At Math Team regionals he earned second place for a two-person team (11) and first place individually (9, 10). He has qualified for state competition for Math Team all four years. Gregory has been involved in Scholastic Bowl (9-12), serving as team captain his senior year. He has been a member of Business Professionals of America (12) and also has participated in Distributive Education Clubs of America, earning third place at the Area Competition for Marketing Management Services (12). Gregory also has been involved in Outdoor Environmental Club (10, 11, 12).

In athletics, he has been a member of boys cross country (9-12) as well as both indoor and outdoor track (9-12).

Gregory has served as a panel member at the Congressional Youth Summit

and has been an American Legion Premier Illinois Boys State Delegate.

In the community, he has served as a mentor at the Woodridge Community Center (11, 12) and volunteered at Oktoberfest (10), the Back-to-School Bash (11) and the Downers Grove Park District 5/10 Miler.

Gregory plans on majoring in either business administration and management or education. He has applied to several universities, among them Northwestern University, the University of Notre Dame, the University of Chicago and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Katie Utesch of Woodridge is the daughter of Bob and Sue Utesch. She has been a member of National Honor Society (11) and the Spanish Honor Society (11). She has received an Academic Letter (9-12) and won the Daughters of the American Revolution Citizenship Award (12) and was named an Illinois State Scholar (12).

Katie has been involved in multiple student activities at South High. She was a member of the volleyball team (9, 10), participated in ACE (9, 10, 12), served as a physical education leader (10, 11, 12), been a Celebrate DARE leader (11, 12), has participated in and has twice been a Snowball leader (10, 11, 12). She has served as a Freshman Buddy (10, 11, 12) and been a Mad Dash leader (10, 11, 12). She also has been involved in the J. Kyle Braid program (11, 12). Katie has worked in the athletic office as an aide (11, 12).

Katie has served her community in various ways. She has been a member of Trinity Lutheran Church's youth group (9, 10) and has been a member of her church's Praise Team (10, 11, 12). She also has been a member of Campus Life Youth Group (11, 12). She has attended Girls State for the American Legion Auxiliary. She has coached seventh- and eighth-grade girls in volleyball (11, 12). She also has served as a mentor for junior high students through the J. Kyle Braid program.

Katie plans to attend Illinois Wesleyan University and to major in secondary education.

Downers Grove North

Alla Dziurma lives in Lisle and is the daughter of Maria and Volodymyr Dziurma. Alla is a member of the National Honor Society (11, 12) and the French Honor Society (10, 11, 12). She received an Academic Letter and was named to the 4.0 and Above Honor Roll (9-12). Also, Alla received the Academic Award of Excellence for History (10) and was named an Illinois State Scholar (12).

Alla's extracurricular interests are evidence of her leadership skills and concern for others. She participated in and served as a group leader for Snowball (10, 11, 12). As a member of Link Crew Leaders (11, 12), she assisted incoming freshmen while they adjusted to their new high school environment. She also took part in Students Against Destructive Decisions (11, 12) and Direct Action Club (11, 12), from which she received a service award. Alla also was a member of the volleyball team (9, 10) and the track and field team (10, 11).

For eight weeks during the summer of 2005, Alla served in an internship program with the American Cancer Society, researching leukemia at Loyola University Medical Center. In connection with this opportunity, Alla received a Certificate of Achievement from the American Cancer Society.

Alla hopes to continue her interest in medicine at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she intends to pursue a course of study aimed toward a medical degree.

Natalie Lorch lives in Woodridge with her parents, Thomas and Molly Lorch. She is a National Merit Commended Scholar (12), an Illinois State Scholar (12), an AP Scholar with Honor (11), a member of the National Honor Society (11, 12) and the Spanish Honor Society (10).

While at North, Natalie has explored many of her talents through the fine arts department programs. She has been a member of the Trojan Marching Band, serving as pit section captain (9-12). Natalie has played in both the Illinois Music Educators Association District I Orchestra (9, 10, 11) and the Illinois Music Educators Association All-State Honors Orchestra (11). She has presented before the Clarence J. Shoemaker Band Scholarship Illinois High School Association Solo and Ensemble Division I Ratings (9, 10, 11) and been a member of the Downers Grove North Chamber Winds (10, 11, 12). Other activities include serving as a Spanish and math tutor (10, 11, 12) and taking part in Link Crew Leadership organization (11, 12).

Other highlights during Natalie's high school years include participating in the Texas Tech University Band and Orchestra Camp (10), volunteering at the Woodridge Pantry (10), attending the Baylor University Band and Orchestra Camp (10), playing in the Youth Symphony of DuPage (10, 11), the Protege Philharmonic (11), the National High School Music Institute (12) and the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra (12). Additional achievements for community competition include the Outstanding Musicianship Award (9, 10, 11) and the Youth Symphony DuPage Concerto Competition first prize (11).

After graduation, Natalie will attend the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where she plans to major in music performance.

Melissa Manjarres, the daughter of David and Rachel Manjarres, lives in Woodridge. She is a 2006 Commended Student in the National Merit Scholarship Program and a member of the National Honor Society (11, 12). Melissa has been listed on both the Straight A Honor Roll and the 4.0 and Above Honor Roll for three consecutive years (9, 10, 11). As a sophomore she was inducted into Spanish Honor Society. During her junior year Melissa received the English and Communications Department Award for five straight "A" semesters in Honors English classes, and was a nominee for the National Council of Teachers of English Achievement Award in Writing. She has been selected for the Academic Award of Excellence in History because of straight A's in World Studies and U.S. History (10), and received the Science Department Award for the highest grade average in Honors Biology (9). Melissa has both the Silver Key Award for Excellence in Visual Arts and a Certificate of Merit for Excellence in Visual Art from the Scholastic Art and Writing Award Competition (9).

Two student activities in which Melissa has participated for four years have been Foreign Language Club and Operation Snowball, where she has been a small group leader and director. She also has been involved with Peer Helpers (10, 11, 12), Peer Mediator (10, 11, 12), Link Crew (11), Speech Team (9) and Class Board (9). Melissa also has been a member of the soccer team (9-12) and served as the team captain. She also has been a member of the cross country team (12) and a member of the cheerleading squad (10, 11).

Melissa has been acknowledged at the University of Illinois as a James Newton Mathews Scholar and by the Business Honors Program. She is also the recipient of the Woodridge Prologis Scholarship.

Melissa will attend the University of Illinois, where she intends to major in business.

Aaron Shatzer, son of Bruce and Kari Shatzer of Woodridge, is a National Merit Scholarship finalist and a member of the National Honor Society (11, 12). Aaron is an American Invitational Mathematical Exam Qualifier (11, 12), an Illinois State Scholar (12), an Advanced Placement Scholar with Honors (12) and an Illinois High School Association Academic Team nominee (12). While at North High his name has appeared on the Straight A Honor Roll (9-12), and he received the Social Studies Gold Key Award (11), the Math Gold Key Award (11) and the Honors Physics Student of the Year Award (11).

Aaron has been involved in a variety of school activities. He is a member of the Marching Band (9-12), where he acts as section captain (12), and the Pep Band (10, 11, 12). Because of his talents he has been selected to play in the Illinois Music Educators Association District I Bands and Orchestras (10, 11, 12) and All-State Honors Band (12). Aaron's other interests at North High School includes the chess team, where he serves as the team captain (12). While a member of this team, Aaron has been named West Suburban Conference Chess Medalist (9-12) and a Sophomore State Chess Champion (10). Aaron also has competed with the North High Tennis Team (9-12) and served as the team's captain during his senior year.

Scouting has been an important community investment. Aaron has been a member of Boy Scout Troop 516 during his four years at North (9-12). He has learned and demonstrated leadership traits as an assistant senior patrol leader (11, 12). In addition, Aaron has volunteered at the local Public Action to Deliver Shelter facility (10, 11, 12).

Though Aaron has not yet committed to a specific college or university, he plans to work in the field of computer science.