

Top Macomb County students recognized at All Academic banquet



Proud Center Line parents Debbie and Michael Card share a photo with their son Kevin at the All Academic Banquet. Ray Skowronek--**The Macomb Daily**

By Gordon Wilczynski, Contributing Writer

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Eisenhower students Erin Kulik and Sitara Murali look over the All Academic Banquet program Wednesday night. Ray Skowronek--**The Macomb Daily**

Over 420 parents, family and school officials attended a banquet on Wednesday honoring Macomb County's best and brightest students.

Eisenhower High School in Shelby Township placed 17 students on the Macomb Daily/Macomb Secondary Principals Class A All-Academic team. Stevenson High School in Sterling Heights had 8 of its students named to the prestigious team while Lutheran North High School in Macomb Township had seven of its students named to the Class B team.

The Macomb All-Academic process was started in 1986 by The Macomb Daily to honor the county's academically best students similar to all-county teams in athletics. Students are selected in four classes - A,B and C/D according to school enrollment.

“We select the students according to their grade point average in four years and ACT or SAT scores,” said Peter Hedemark, principal of Roseville High School and co-chairman of the committee that oversees the event.

Students Brendan Kelley of Fraser High School and Daniel Mathew of Henry Ford II High School in Sterling Heights scored a perfect 36 on their ACT. Several students, including James VanWagnen of Center Line, Dylan Gaines of Stevenson High School, Joseph Gazzarato of Eisenhower High School, Conner McCormick of L’Anse Creuse North High School and Jack Novack of Chippewa Valley High School in Clinton Township missed being perfect by one point.

“This is a fabulous affair and it is an honor to be a major part of it,” said Michael DeVault, Superintendent of the Macomb Intermediate School District. “We know it takes an enormous amount of time and effort to put on such a wonderful event but the young men and women who now are going on to college deserve the recognition.”

John Dignan, principal of Warren-Mott High School, offered kudos to The Macomb Daily and Macomb Intermediate School District for recognizing academic genius.

Deborah Michon, longtime member of the All-Academic Committee and principal of Richmond High School, said Jostens (high school rings), Prestige Portrait and Utica Community Schools (certificates) have supported the event for several years.

“These people care about kids,” Michon said.

Also at the banquet Hedemark introduced Sara Minor from Anchor Bay High School, and Jacqueline Bellow of Dakota High School, who received the 2016 Macomb Athletic Conference Leadership Scholarship.

Besides Hedemark and Michon, other All-Academic Committee members are Nanette Chesney of Eisenhower High School in Shelby Township, Steve Czapski of L’Anse Creuse High School in Harrison Township, Greg Dixon of L’Anse Creuse North High School in Macomb Township, and retired Macomb Daily reporter Gordie Wilczynski.

“This is one event our entire district looks forward to,” said Christine Johns, Superintendent of Utica Community Schools. “We are proud to have 37 students honored by The Macomb Daily and our principals. They most certainly deserve the recognition.”

Joseph Depasquale, principale of Parkway Christian Schools in Sterling Heights, praised the way students are honored with a banquet that includes a dinner. He went on to credit parents for their role in supporting the students.

John R. Kment of Roseville Community Schools, the longest-serving superintendent in Macomb County history at 28 years, said a good quality education and family support can change the world.

“The Daily has always been good to our schools and this is just one huge way they display it,” Kment said. “When we had bad news it was in The Macomb Daily. And when we called their reporters about something positive, it also was in our paper.”

Ron Roberts, superintendent of Chippewa Valley Schools, which includes the state’s largest high school -- Dakota -- said he is proud that students from Dakota and Chippewa Valley high schools receive the prestige that comes with being named an Macomb All-Academic student.

“We appreciate what The Macomb Daily and our high school principals’ association does for our children.”

Johns added the student’s achievements are the result of many hours of hard work and staying at home studying while their friends were out playing.

“Our school board, administrative team at central office, principals and teachers have to take a bow,” Johns said. “The parents and families of these talented young men and women also have to stand tall and be recognized and that’s what we do at the banquet.”

The Macomb Daily/Macomb Secondary Principals banquet, held at Villa Penna Restaurant & Banquets, was started in April, 1986 at Macomb Community College. Hundreds of students have been recognized at the event over the past 31 years.