

Principals teamed up to rank the All Stars

They represent school districts from around the area, but these administrators all came to the table March 30 for a common goal — to select the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers Academic All-Stars of Wayne and Oakland counties.

"I think that every building principal wants to take the time to recognize students," said Larry Boehms, principal of Troy High School, "but it's tough sometimes to get a group of us together."

Boehms has chaired the Academic All-Star Committee for the past five years and served on it for nine. When asked why he, along with other administrators, keep coming back, he responded, "It's the fact that we get to recognize these great kids across the county." He also said the "interaction between principals and assistant principals" was nice.

Administrators went through 119 applications representing 60 schools in the Observer & Eccentric coverage area. They focused on two areas of the application.

"Our job is to verify that the information on the application is accurate," said Boehms. "We'll look at the grade point average and the ACT or SAT scores."

All applications were to be accompanied by transcripts, verification of the student's ACT or SAT scores and the signature of the school principal. If one of the elements was missing, however, the student was not automatically disqualified. Boehms placed a call to the student's principal and had the necessary information faxed to the judges.

"We never want to leave a kid out who is eligible," he said.

In an attempt to level the playing field, judges only used grades from core classes: math, science, social studies, foreign language and English. The students with the highest combined scores (GPA and ACT/SAT scores) were named to the All-Star team. Twenty All-Stars were selected in Wayne County, which had 45 applicants. Twenty-five winners were selected in Oakland County, which had 74 applicants.

According to Boehms, when judging is based solely on the numbers, choosing the winners is easy. The

process, which occurred at the Livonia headquarters of The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, took about an hour to complete.

Joining Boehms at the judging table were: Jennifer Hammond, assistant principal of Troy High School; Bridget Guerra, assistant principal of Kettering High School in Waterford; John Dileggio, principal of Clarkston High School; George Fornero, principal of West Bloomfield High School; Gail Weeks, assistant principal of Northville High School; and Terry Piper, principal of Seaholm High School in Birmingham.

"I appreciate these people taking the time to help with the selection process," Boehms said.

Hugh Gallagher, managing editor for The Observer Newspaper group, seconds Boehms' appreciation for the judges, who sifted through 10-15 applications each to find the winners.

"The Observer is happy to have the cooperation of the education community to recognize these young scholars. The time that they take away from their busy schedules is appreciated," he said.

Gallagher also expressed satisfaction about the quality and range of students who submitted applications.

"Every year, we recognize various athletic programs at various high schools. We realized that it was equally important to recognize the academic achievements of schools and their students," Gallagher said. "The Academic All-Stars is a way to recognize both the schools and their students."

"This marks the 15th anniversary of the Observer & Eccentric Academic All-Stars program. The program



STAFF PHOTO BY TOM HEWLEY

Teammates: These are the school officials who selected the Academic All-Stars. Seated, from left, are West Bloomfield High Principal George Fornero, Troy High Assistant Principal Jennifer Hammond, Northville High Assistant Principal Gail Weeks and Waterford-Kettering High Assistant Principal Bridget Guerra. Standing, from left, are Troy High Principal Larry W. Boehms, Clarkston High Principal John Dileggio and Seaholm High Principal Terry Piper.

started in 1985 when Robert Schramke, the Redford Union High School principal at the time, approached a newspaper executive with the idea of honoring students for academic achievement.

Each All-Star will receive a certificate of recognition and the latest edition of Webster's New World Dictionary. Additionally, they, along with the runners-up, are honored in this special section.

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Extracurricular activities: National Honor Society; Spanish Club; and Human Relations Committee.

Influential teacher: Lynn Elssesser, Spanish. "She has helped me a lot with scholarship applications and preparing for next year."

Moro believes her generation will continue advancements in technology. "I envision new uses for technology that can help improve education and improve communication between people."

She is the daughter of Martin and Audrey Moro and the sister of Erik, 14, Katie, 11, and Claire, 9.

Christine Chan
Plymouth-Canton High School
Canton

College: Yale, Georgetown or the University of Michigan; international politics/pre-law.

Academic honors: National Merit Scholarship finalist;

ist; summer school at Yale; Michigan Girls State; American Chinese Association Scholarship for Leadership and Academic Achievement; Michigan MEAP Scholarship; and Who's Who Among American High School Students.

Extracurricular activities: Student senate, co-president; Students Against Destructive Decisions president; National Forensics League vice president; Forensics; varsity tennis; National Honor Society; piano; student ambassador; church youth group; Junior Civitan; and Michigan Student Musician League.

Influential teacher: Steve Marsh, debate and forensics coach. "From the very start of high school, he helped me to overcome my shyness, become a confident person and set high goals for myself."

Chan thinks her generation "needs to go back to the idea of societal responsibility in raising youth. Parents cannot bring up a child on their own." She would also like to see an improvement in the messages society gives to young people.

She is the daughter of Kenneth and Mai Chan and the sister of David, 22.

Eva-Marie David
Mercy High School
Farmington Hills

College: Xavier University; astrophysics.

Academic honors: Science Olympiad third and fourth places; and National Merit Scholarship finalist.

Extracurricular activities: Drama; National Honor Society; Pastoral Team, worship committee; Our Lady of Sorrows Youth Group; Girl Scouts, canoe aide; and

Eucharistic Minister.

Influential teacher: W. Thomas Schusterbauer, English. "Although I have always been a math and science-oriented person, and still am, he helped me become interested in literature which I had never really enjoyed studying. Much of what I have read since has opened my mind to new ideas about myself and the world around me."

David thinks her generation "is extremely aware of the world around us and will help us make use of our technology to help end people's suffering."

She is the daughter of Richard A. and Jeanne M. David and the sister of Peter, 16.

Joseph Colombo
Thurston High School
Redford

College: University of Michigan or Wayne State University; pre-medicine.

Academic honors: National Merit Scholarship commended student; and Wayne State University Presidential Scholar.

Extracurricular activities: National Honor Society; Science Olympiad; drama; and choir.

Influential teacher: Kathleen Lay, fifth grade teacher, and Kris Black, fourth grade teacher. "They inspired me to work hard. Now, as my counselor, Mrs. Lay is helping me make important life decisions."

Colombo hopes his generation will "bring new advances to fields of medicine and space exploration." He envisions more trips to outer space and visits to different planets.

He is the son of Dave and Mary Colombo and the brother of Mike, 13.

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