



MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE

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36 High School Juniors Recognized for Leadership and Community Service

BROOKLYN CENTER, Minn. --- The Minnesota State High School League and Wells Fargo will honor some of the state's top student leaders with the ExCEL Award during ceremonies at the Girls' State Basketball Tournament on Saturday, March 17.

ExCEL—**Ex**cellence in **C**ommunity, **E**ducation and **L**eadership—is a unique recognition award that is given annually to high school juniors who are active in League sponsored activities, leaders in their schools, and who demonstrate a strong commitment to community service.

“The young people that we are honoring today are community service-centered and very deserving of this award, said Lisa Lissimore, the associate director who oversees the ExCEL program. “These student leaders go beyond the classroom and the field of competition to improve the quality of life for others—giving wherever help is needed,” Lissimore explained.

Like previous ExCEL award recipients, the 2018 honorees are engaged in projects that build stronger, healthier, and safer communities. They tutor students, teach Sunday school, assist seniors, visit shelters, clean highways, and fundraise for worthy causes. They also share their musical and theatrical talents at community events.

Wells Fargo, the League's premier corporate sponsor, began its sponsorship of the ExCEL program in 2016. “These are extraordinary students who will be our leaders of tomorrow,” said Minnesota Region President Joe Ravens of Wells Fargo. “We are proud to recognize these students, who set the bar high for others through all that they are accomplishing during their high school years.”

The ExCEL award program began in 1996. Award recipients are selected through a multi-level process that involves League member schools and an independent panel of judges from schools

throughout Minnesota. More than 5,000 students have been recognized with this award program. Two-hundred and ninety-eight students were nominated by their schools this year.

45TV, the League's broadcast partner, will profile each ExCEL award recipients during its broadcast of the basketball tournaments. Each student will also participate in an on-court award ceremony during the halftime of the Class AA girls' basketball championship game on March 17.

Here is the list of the 2018 ExCEL Award winners:

Anna Braun, <i>Jordan</i>	Jared Josephson, <i>Minneota</i>
Annica Carr, <i>Elk River</i>	Lauren Karnitz, <i>Redwood Valley</i>
Jordan Case, <i>Orono</i>	Kerryn Lund, <i>Brandon-Evansville</i>
Elizabeth Christian, <i>Tri-City United</i>	John Luu Leon Mathiowetz, <i>Sleepy Eye-St. Mary's</i>
Carson Dock, <i>Waconia</i>	Sanjana Molleti, <i>Eastview, Apple Valley</i>
Drew Elvehjem, <i>Mora</i>	Kathleen Nordstrom, <i>Annandale</i>
Sophie Epps, <i>Cannon Falls</i>	Gigi Otten, <i>Albert Lea</i>
Camryn Franke, <i>St. Paul Washington Technology</i>	Jarod Pavek, <i>Waterville-Elysian-Morristown</i>
Hailey Handevitdt, <i>Jackson County Central</i>	Graham Pearson, <i>Cannon Falls</i>
Carter Hansen, <i>Russell-Tyler-Ruthon</i>	Nathan Popp, <i>Royalton</i>
Matthew Harfmann, <i>Kasson-Mantorville</i>	Faith Robinson, <i>Minnetonka</i>
Samuel Hauser, <i>Eagan</i>	Peyton Rohloff, <i>Hancock</i>
Kristin Haveri, <i>Two Harbors</i>	Stuart Scamehorn, <i>St. Anthony Village</i>
Addison Hawkins, <i>Mora</i>	Scout Strickland, <i>Staples-Motley</i>
Dylan Heggedal, <i>Greenbush Middle River</i>	Yusanat Tway, <i>St. Paul Humboldt</i>
Gabriella Helger, <i>Sleepy Eye-St. Mary's</i>	Leah Vraspir, <i>Watertown-Mayer</i>
Trevor Hendrix, <i>Robbinsdale Cooper</i>	Kennedi Wright, <i>Wheaton</i>
Dakota John, <i>Adrian</i>	Brandon Young, <i>Upsala</i>