

**March 20, 2026**

**Additional \$27,000 Awarded to High School Seniors**  
**IHSAA Foundation and Forté Sports Medicine and Orthopedics**  
**celebrate 10 different scholarships**

The IHSAA, the IHSAA Foundation and Forté Sports Medicine and Orthopedics are proud to announce the selection of 21 senior student-athletes for 10 scholarships to be presented this Spring.

Alongside the C. Eugene Cato Memorial Scholarships [announced previously](#), the IHSAA and IHSAA Foundation are proud to recognize and honor the legacies of legends and leaders of Indiana with recipients for the following scholarships:

- Bobby & Kathy Cox Post-Secondary Scholarship
- David Cranfill Truehearted Teammate Award
- Pris Dillow “Seize the Day” Post-Secondary Scholarship
- Amy Hasbrook Family Leadership Award
- Denny Lewis Legacy of Advocacy Post-Secondary Scholarship
- Lee Lonzo Champions Together Post-Secondary Scholarship
- Parker Amet Post-Secondary Scholarship
- James Robinson Pathway to Officiating Post-Secondary Scholarship
- Sparks Foundation Post-Secondary Scholarship.



Forté Orthopedic Research Institute will proudly honor two Indiana high school student-athletes with the 2026 Thomas A. Brady, MD Comeback Scholarship Award.

To be awarded, applicants must be nominated by an administrator from their school who believes they excel in each scholarship’s unique criteria and requirements. Applications for all 10

*Supporting education-based athletics for the next generation.*

scholarships were opened this calendar year with over 250 completed applications received from across the state.

The IHSAA Foundation's Scholarship Committee, alongside representatives from the family and friends of each scholarship's name, determined the final recipients based on the cumulative work and experiences in competition, within the classroom, and impact on their community.

Scholarships awarded range between \$1,000 and \$2,500 to be used for post-secondary educational expenses (4-year college, 2-year college, trade/technical school).

Since 2003-04, the IHSAA and IHSAA Foundation have recognized 347 outstanding student-athletes with scholarships totaling \$736,000.

Scholarship recipients will be recognized at this year's [IHSAA Foundation Impact Awards](#) at Gridiron Hall, within the Indianapolis Colts Indiana Farm Bureau Football Center on Sunday, April 12, 2026, alongside the IHSAA Foundation's C. Eugene Cato Memorial Scholarship recipients and the graduating seniors of the IHSAA's Student Advisory Committee.

Additional information on each scholarship recipient and the history of each award can be found on the IHSAA Foundation website at [IHSAA.org/Foundation](https://IHSAA.org/Foundation).

A brief bio of each recipient and an explanation and history of each scholarship are listed on the ensuing pages:

## **Bobby & Kathy Cox Post-Secondary Scholarship**

The Bobby and Kathy Cox Scholarship Endowment Fund was created in 2020 after Bobby Cox's retirement as commissioner of the IHSAA. He and his wife Kathy were long time administrators in the state of Indiana, with 74 combined years as educators and supporters of education-based athletics. The scholarship was created to shine a light on senior student-athletes in the state of Indiana who will be the first in their families to attend a post-secondary education institution, while also showing outstanding teamwork, leadership, and good character throughout high school. Two recipients from each of the three IHSAA districts were selected to receive a one-time \$1,500 scholarship for post-secondary educational expenses.

\*Recipients of the Bobby & Kathy Cox Post-Secondary Scholarship will be honored and recognized by Bobby and Kathy Cox for their achievement at a mutually agreed upon celebration with the IHSAA member school.

This year's recipients include:

### **Zeke Faulkens (Greenwood Community)**

**Zeke Faulkens** of Greenwood Community High School is a two-sport athlete, participating in Basketball and Football during his time as a Woodmen. Faulkens is a Cadet Teacher and created Greenwood's first Black Student Union. His community service work includes assisting with various youth football and basketball leagues in the Greenwood Community and helping winterize homes each year by raking leaves, cleaning gutters, and other various home projects.

### **Marley Jackson (Edgewood)**

**Marley Jackson** of Edgewood High School participated in Golf, Tennis, and Volleyball during her time as a Mustang and has earned All-Conference honors for Golf. She is a member of the National Honor Society, Leadership Academy, and Student Section Advisory Committee. She has volunteered her time assisting with youth tennis camps and enjoys helping younger kids understand the sport and grow as athletes. In the fall, Marley plans to attend Indiana University Bloomington.

### **Victoria Quiroga (Hammond Bishop Noll)**

**Victoria Quiroga** of Bishop Noll High School participated in Golf, Unified Track & Field, and Volleyball during her time as a Warrior. She is a four-year member of Noll's Marching Band, serves as Treasurer of the Spanish Honor Society, and is President of the Hispanic Student Union. Victoria plans to relocate to San Antonio, Texas and will pursue a degree in Nursing.

### **Macy Rakestraw (Kokomo)**

**Macy Rakestraw** of Kokomo High School participated in Cross Country, Unified Track & Field, and Volleyball during her time as a Wildkat. Macy serves as Team Captain for Unified Track & Field, Vice President of the Environmental Club, and is also a member of National Honor Society. Macy's volunteer work aligns with her passion for preserving the environment as she participated in numerous community clean-ups. In the fall, she plans to attend Indiana University Bloomington.

### **Allie Ralson (Concord)**

**Allie Ralston** of Concord High School is a four-time varsity letter winner in Softball. Allie is a member of Concord's Key Club, National Honor Society, and Student Council. She has volunteered her time cleaning headstones, assisting with holiday toy drives, and working as a camp counselor. Allie will be pursuing a degree in Nursing at Saint Mary's College in the Fall.

### **Connor Sullivan (Greencastle)**

**Connor Sullivan** of Greencastle is a three-sport athlete, participating in Baseball, Basketball, and Football. He is a two-year Varsity Captain in both Baseball and Basketball, a member of the Student Advisory Committee and National Honor Society and is the school's Cheer Block Leader. Connor also volunteers his time of Sunday mornings as a Sunday School Teacher at Sherwood Christian Church. He plans to attend DePauw University to study finance.

## **David Cranfill Truehearted Teammate Award**

David Cranfill was a friend to the IHSAA for over 40 years. He was an advertising agency owner, a writer, a filmmaker, and a communicator. He worked tirelessly to promote the purity, passion, and enthusiasm of high school sports until his passing in 2021. He dedicated much of his life and energy to telling the story of all 160,000 Hoosier student-athletes and the life lessons they learned by playing high school athletics. He always put his work, his family, and his teammates first. David exemplified what it meant to be a truehearted teammate.

The David Cranfill Truehearted Teammate Award is a \$1,000 scholarship that will be awarded to one deserving male and one deserving female student-athlete who demonstrate selfless dedication to their team without expectation of reward or recognition. The winners of these scholarships will be selected for having exhibited loyalty and faithfulness by putting their teammates, coaches, school, and community above themselves.

This year's recipients include:

### **Aubrey Hanger (Kankakee Valley)**

**Aubrey Hanger** of Kankakee Valley High School is a two-sport student-athlete, competing in Softball and Volleyball during her time as a Kougat. In addition to her athletic involvement, Aubrey is a member of Business Professionals of America, National Honor Society, Science Club, Prom Committee, and the Freshman Mentor Program. Her passion for serving others was inspired by her grandmother's journey as a cancer survivor. In response, she trained her family's Golden Retriever to become a certified therapy dog. Together, they regularly visit local nursing homes, hospitals, and libraries, bringing comfort and companionship to those in the community. Aubrey believes that the true value of athletics lies in the way teammates support one another. She strives to be the teammate who encourages others, offers help when it is needed, and fosters a culture of kindness and positivity. Through her actions both on and off the field, Aubrey exemplifies the spirit of teamwork, compassion, and leadership.

### **Easton Minix (Knox)**

**Easton Minix** of Knox High School is a three-sport student-athlete, competing in Baseball, Football, and Track & Field during his time as a Redskin. He is member of National Honor Society, Peer Tutors, and Student Council. Outside of athletics and academics, Easton is a ten-year member of 4H, and actively volunteers in his community, assisting with food and toy drives, working school events, and coaching youth flag football. Through his experiences in athletics, Easton has developed a deep appreciation for the meaning of teamwork. He believes a truehearted teammate supports others through both victories and challenges, recognizing that the bonds formed through sports extend far beyond the field. Easton strives to embody those values, understanding that the lessons learned as a teammate help shape not only better athletes, but better people.

## **Pris Dillow “Seize the Day” Post-Secondary Scholarship**

As the first female board member of the IHSAA, Priscilla Dillow was no stranger to leading positive change. A constant supporter and promoter of women’s athletics, Pris Dillow believed in leaving a legacy for others. The term “Seize the Day” was the motto adopted by Coach Dillow to invigorate herself and those around her. With her passion and willingness to accept every opportunity, she lived the change she wanted to see. Facing obstacles in the fight for equity in women’s athletics, Pris continued to stay positive and seek change wherever she could. This passion and devotion made her a trailblazer and created numerous opportunities for female athletics.

Founded in 2024 to honor the trailblazing legacy built, the Priscilla Dillow “Seize the Day” Scholarship provides financial support to a female student-athlete who continues to make strides in athletics. Each year, one female student-athlete will receive a \$1,000 scholarship for their accomplishment in the classroom and in competition.

This year’s recipient:

### **Maesa Horton (Crawfordsville)**

**Maesa Horton** of Crawfordsville High School has demonstrated a deep commitment to teamwork, leadership, and sportsmanship throughout her high school experience. A three-sport athlete, she participated in Soccer, Swimming & Diving, and Track & Field for the Athenians.

Maesa has consistently displayed the character and determination that define a true teammate, and her leadership extends far beyond competition. She serves as President of Crawfordsville’s Bring Change to Mind Club, promoting mental health awareness among her peers, and is a Senior Representative on both the Student Leadership Team and the Student Athletic Leadership Team. She also contributes as Secretary of the Interact Club and is an active member of Show Choir and Student Council.

Outside of school, Maesa continues to make a positive impact within her church community, where she lends her voice to the choir and volunteers her time to support families through babysitting services.

Through her athletic journey, Maesa has embraced the responsibility of being a reliable teammate, balancing demanding commitments to ensure she supports every group she is part of. She has come to value the lessons learned through both victory and defeat. As a future educator, she hopes to carry forward the principles of respect, perseverance, and teamwork, inspiring the next generation to understand that true sportsmanship extends far beyond the scoreboard.

## **Amy Hasbrook Family Leadership Award**

In honor of the 50th anniversary celebration of Title IX in 2022, the Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc. began awarding the Amy Hasbrook Leadership Award. Amy Hasbrook was a student-athlete at Cathedral High School in Indianapolis and later DePauw University who participated in girls' basketball and was a product of the opportunities that Title IX created. Amy tragically perished in a house fire in 2002. Her legacy is the impression she left on those who knew her.

Thanks to a very generous donation to the IHSAA Foundation from the Hasbrook family of Indianapolis in the name of their late daughter, Amy, two post-secondary scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each are awarded each year. Two female, multi-sport student-athletes who best exemplify and embody sportsmanship, leadership, integrity, dedication to the team, and community service will be selected from the IHSAA's member schools.

This year's recipients include:

### **Keegan LaRoche (Southridge)**

**Keegan LaRoche** stands out as an exceptional young woman whose character, work ethic, faith, and commitment to serving others define who she is. At Southridge, she competes as a three-sport athlete in Golf, Softball, and Wrestling, while also contributing as a manager for the boys varsity Basketball and Football teams. Beyond athletics, Keegan is an active member of the National Honor Society and Student Council and has earned Academic All-State honors in Wrestling. She is also involved in Health Occupations Students of America, where she has explored different areas of healthcare and developed empathy for those she hopes to serve in the future.

Service to others is at the heart of Keegan's passion. Looking ahead, she hopes to combine her passion for healthcare, service, and athletics by pursuing a career in nursing while eventually returning to her community to coach and mentor young athletes.

### **Maria Mayer (East Central)**

**Maria Mayer's** leadership, sportsmanship, and commitment to serving others truly embody the spirit of the Amy Hasbrook Family Leadership Award. A two-sport student-athlete at East Central High School, Maria competed in Basketball and Soccer for the Trojans. She has earned All-District and All-Conference recognition on the soccer field and holds the school records for most goals and most points in a season. Beyond the accolades, being selected as a team captain stands as the honor she values most, reflecting the trust and respect she earned from her teammates.

Equally impressive is Maria's dedication to leadership and service. She is an active member of the Acts of Kindness Club, whose mission is to spread positivity, improve student morale, and create a more supportive school environment. She's also a member of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America, where she participates in service projects such as preparing meals and sewing blankets for families in need. In addition, she has shown her commitment to helping others by volunteering at Matthew 25 Ministries, supporting local fairs, mentoring younger students, and assisting elderly neighbors with yard work. These experiences reflect Maria's deep belief in giving back and strengthening the community around her.

Maria plans to major in chemistry while continuing her soccer career at Ashland University, with aspirations of pursuing a career in healthcare through physical therapy or pharmacy. She hopes to one day return to athletics as a coach, mentoring young athletes the way her own mentors shaped her.

**Jordan Steele (Highland)**

**Jordan Steele** of Highland High School is dependable, respectful, and highly coachable, all qualities that carry seamlessly from the classroom to the court and into her everyday life. A multi-sport athlete, Jordan has participated in Basketball, Cross Country, and Softball, and has served as team captain in both basketball and cross country. She has earned the trust of her teammates by leading through hard work, accountability, and encouragement.

Beyond athletics, Jordan serves as Co-President of Highland's Student Athletic Leadership Committee and Vice President of Character for the National Honor Society. She is also an active member of the Spanish National Honor Society, Student Council, and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Jordan is deeply committed to serving her community, volunteering at her church by caring for children during Sunday services and helping distribute meals to individuals and families in need. These experiences have strengthened her compassion and sense of responsibility toward others.

Looking ahead, Jordan plans to continue her basketball career at the collegiate level while pursuing a degree in nursing. Inspired by the same values that guide her as an athlete, she hopes to one day care for others during their most vulnerable moments. Jordan credits the opportunities made possible through Title IX for allowing her to compete, grow as a leader, and discover confidence in her voice and abilities. Through athletics, academics, and service, she continues to reflect the legacy of leadership and character that this scholarship celebrates.

## **Denny Lewis Legacy of Advocacy Post-Secondary Scholarship**

As a fervent champion of education-based athletics, Dennis “Denny” Lewis worked tirelessly to protect and grow the opportunities for Indiana’s high school student-athletes. The late, 37-year educator left a lasting impact on communities around the state. Serving in multiple roles for the betterment of student-athletes, Denny was a coach, administrator, and friend to many. Most notably as Athletic Director at Jasper High School for the final 17 years of his career, Denny inspired his players, students, and peers to live lives based on the teachings of education-based athletics.

Thanks to the donations from family, friends, former players, and admirers of Denny’s life and legacy, a \$1,000 scholarship is to be awarded each year. Recipients are selected based on who best exemplifies the qualities that Denny worked to instill, actively continue to promote the values of education-based athletics and showing a financial need for post-secondary education and/or training.

This year’s recipient:

### **Ella McManomy (North Montgomery)**

**Ella McManomy** of North Montgomery High School exemplifies the values of determination, responsibility, and compassion that lie at the heart of education-based athletics.

During her time as a Charger, Ella competed in Basketball, Soccer, Softball, and Track & Field. She credits her experiences as an athlete with developing qualities that will guide her far beyond the playing field - qualities like resilience in the face of challenges, passion for her goals, and a deep sense of responsibility toward others. These lessons have shaped her aspiration of becoming a veterinarian, a profession that requires both dedication and compassion for the well-being of animals. Ella credits athletics with teaching her how her actions impact those around her and with helping her develop the perseverance needed to pursue the demanding path toward earning a Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine.

Honored to receive this scholarship, Ella views this recognition as both a reflection of her hard work and encouragement to continue pursuing her goals. She will attend Purdue University in the Fall.

## **Lee Lonzo Champions Together Post-Secondary Scholarship**

In partnership with the Lonzo Family and Friends, the IHSAA and IHSAA Foundation are proud to present the Lee Lonzo Champions Together Post-Secondary Scholarship. Each year, a pair of Unified Sport student-athletes from an IHSAA member school will be awarded \$1,000 scholarships based on their dedication and exemplary support of the Champions Together program in their school and community.

The recipients of this scholarship represent the best that Champions Together has to offer student-athletes with and without intellectual disabilities as they participate side-by-side in spirited interscholastic competition. Applicants are judged by their commitment to comradery, inclusiveness, team spirit, and character while participating in Champions Together related activities, a program that became a reality in Indiana in December of 2012.

This year's recipients:

### **Hannah Dugan and Quinn Johnston (Noblesville)**

At Noblesville High School, **Quinn Johnston** has become a cornerstone of the Champions Together program. His involvement began at a young age, working alongside his father, and over the years, he has grown into a leader whose presence is synonymous with inclusivity and a passion for uplifting others. Quinn believes wholeheartedly that every student deserves equal opportunities to participate and succeed. He goes beyond simply being a teammate. He is a mentor, encourager, and advocate for those around him. Whether helping a teammate build confidence in their abilities or guiding them through new challenges, Quinn approaches every interaction with patience, care, and respect. His leadership is most evident in the way he celebrates others. No accomplishment is too small, and his enthusiasm for his teammates' successes creates an environment where everyone feels seen, supported, and motivated to give their best.

**Hannah Dugan** brings an equally powerful and inspiring presence to Unified sports as a student-athlete who embodies inclusion, leadership, and joy. Her compassion is evident in every interaction, as she consistently prioritizes the well-being and confidence of her teammates. Beyond competition, Hannah's vibrant personality and infectious energy have made her a driving force behind team spirit. As one of the original members of Noblesville's Unified Cheer team, she has played a vital role in energizing crowds and uplifting her fellow athletes at events, creating an atmosphere of excitement, and belonging that extends far beyond the game itself.

Together, Quinn and Hannah represent the heart and soul of Champions Together. Their shared journey across multiple Unified activities, including Track and Field, Basketball, Bowling, and even the school's first Unified Musical, has strengthened a bond rooted in trust, friendship, and mutual respect. Their collaboration in both athletics and the arts highlights the true purpose of Unified programs.

Looking ahead, both Quinn and Hannah plan to continue their commitment to inclusion through careers in education, with a focus on special needs and adaptive education. Their shared aspiration to one day work together in a school setting speaks volumes about their dedication to making a lasting difference in the lives of others. They are not only products of the Champions Together program, but future leaders who will carry its mission forward.

## **Parker Amet Champions Together Post-Secondary Scholarship**

As a symbol for inclusivity and kindness, the IHSAA and IHSAA Foundation are honored to partner with friends of the 2016 Carmel High School Prom King to award the Parker Amet Post-Secondary scholarship to one partner athlete who participated in their school's Champions Together program. Announced in 2021, the Parker Amet scholarship annually awards \$1,000 of financial support to a partner athlete who continues the work of the scholarship's name. These recipients are leaders within their schools and champions for a better community. These future and current leaders have demonstrated high character, ability to work alongside and support others and, above all else, high moral character.

This year's recipient:

### **Grace Dickmeyer (Homestead)**

**Grace Dickmeyer** of Homestead High School is a three-sport student-athlete who competes in Swimming & Diving and serves as a partner athlete in Unified Flag Football and Unified Track & Field. She is highly involved in her school community, serving as President of Homestead's National Organization for Women (NOW) Club and as a board member for DECA, Law Club, and Best Buddies. Grace is also a member of the National Honor Society, Student Athletic Leadership Team, and Student Government.

Beyond her extracurricular activities, Grace is the co-founder of the nonprofit Hopeful Hearts Project, an organization dedicated to supporting women battling breast cancer. Through fundraising events, they are able to raise awareness while also collecting donations. The money raised is used to put together and send personalized care packages to women battling the disease.

Grace's life was profoundly shaped by her experience in Unified Sports, which she joined during her freshman year while searching for a sense of belonging. Struggling with anxiety and insecurity at the time, Grace found an unexpected community through Unified Track. What began with a simple conversation with a former classmate quickly grew into meaningful friendships with teammates who welcomed her without hesitation. Through practices, competitions, and time spent with their families, Grace gained a deeper appreciation for the resilience and positivity of her teammates, many of whom face daily challenges yet continue to uplift those around them. Unified Sports became far more than an extracurricular activity, it became a place where Grace could be her authentic self, find joy in competition, and grow as a person. The experience taught her perseverance, empathy, and the importance of encouraging others, lessons that will continue to guide her throughout her life and inspire her to share the life-changing impact of Unified Sports with everyone she meets.

## **James Robinson Pathway to Officiating Post-Secondary Scholarship**

The life of James Robinson was dedicated to sports on multiple levels and avenues. As a youth coach in his community, he was beloved by his players and parents. As an eight-time IHSAA State Finals official, across three sports, James was respected and a mentor to many. As a member of the first all-African American crew to officiate a Power 5 football game, James was a trailblazer.

Started in 2024 by the friends, family, and colleagues of this 30+ year champion and advocate for the importance and benefits of athletics, the James Robinson Post-Secondary Scholarship was founded to support a graduating senior who displays a holistic view and passion for athletics with an interest in becoming an official. Each year, one recipient will be chosen to receive \$1,000 in support who will continue to forge a path for new officials and experiences for student athletes.

This year's recipient:

### **Carter Hayden (Edgewood)**

**Carter Hayden** of Edgewood High School is a three-sport student-athlete who has competed in Baseball, Basketball, and Football for the Mustangs. Beyond his participation in athletics, Carter dedicates significant time to supporting Edgewood's athletic department by operating digital scoreboard graphics, announcing sub-varsity contests, and serving as a sports marketing student intern. Through these roles, he has embraced the opportunity to help others succeed while building meaningful connections within his school community.

During his senior year, Carter has also pursued education in officiating for multiple sports and has already begun applying that training by officiating youth Flag Football, Baseball, Softball, and Basketball games. Recognizing the growing need for officials, he is enthusiastic about helping others develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for the game.

Carter's commitment to giving back to his community is evident through his service and leadership. He believes that fostering a mindset of growth and learning can positively impact both schools and communities. Carter hopes to carry that philosophy forward as he continues officiating following graduation.

## **Sparks Foundation Post-Secondary Scholarship**

In partnership with the Sparks Foundation, the IHSAA Foundation is proud to present the Sparks Foundation Post-Secondary Scholarship to two Indiana high school student-athletes that show teamwork, leadership, and good character. This annual scholarship starting in 2021 celebrates the accomplishments on the field, in the classroom, and throughout the community by awarding \$1,000 to each recipient.

This year's recipients include:

### **Gabriella Krause (Oregon-Davis)**

**Gabriella Krause** of Oregon-Davis High School is two-sport student-athlete, participating in Basketball and Volleyball in each of her years as a Bobcat. She served as a Varsity Team Captain in both sports. She has served as Class Secretary, is a member of Oregon-Davis's National Honor Society and Student Athletic Council. Gabriella's volunteer work includes working with the Special Olympics as a basketball official, spending time with residents at local nursing homes, and helping clean veterans' headstones at Knox Crown Hill Cemetery. She will attend Butler University in the Fall.

### **Cameron Lattimore (Churubusco)**

**Cameron Lattimore** of Churubusco High School is a three-sport student-athlete, competing in Football, Track & Field, and Wrestling in each of his years as an Eagle. He served as a Varsity Team Captain and received Academic All-State recognition in Football and Wrestling. Cameron is a member of Churubusco's National Honor Society. Beyond athletics, he spends time working Churubusco's extracurricular activities and coaching youth football and wrestling. Cameron plans to attend Wabash College in the Fall.

## **Thomas A. Brady Comeback Award**

The Brady Comeback Awards are named for Dr. Thomas A Brady, a founder of Forté Sports Medicine and Orthopedics who is known as the father of sports medicine in Central Indiana. The awards honor both male and female student athletes at the high school level from Indiana who have distinguished themselves by overcoming adversity or injury and returned and excelled beyond expectations in their respective sports.

This year's honorees persevered as they recovered from injuries, surgeries, and treatments to help lead and inspire their respective teams on and off the court, field, and sidelines. Recipients receive a \$2,500 scholarship, which was awarded at the IHSAA Impact Awards. To learn more about the Forté Institute, visit [forteinstitute.org](https://forteinstitute.org).

This year's recipients include:

### **Jackson Bradley (Cowan)**

**Jackson Bradley's** journey is a powerful testament to resilience, faith, and unwavering determination in the face of adversity. A three-time State Wrestling finalist and national-level competitor, Jackson was performing at the peak of his career when a devastating spinal injury in May 2025 changed everything. After fracturing his T1 and T2 vertebrae during a tournament match, Jackson lost feeling in his upper body and was diagnosed with Central Cord Syndrome, leaving him temporarily paralyzed and facing the possibility of never regaining independence or returning to the sport he loved. In a matter of moments, his future became uncertain.

Refusing to let that moment define him, Jackson attacked his recovery with relentless determination. Through intensive rehabilitation, he gradually rebuilt strength and mobility, leaning on his faith to guide him through the most difficult days. What once felt impossible became reality just seven weeks later, as he made his return to the wrestling mat. His comeback defied medical expectations and demonstrated extraordinary mental and physical toughness. Through this process, his perspective shifted, embracing the belief that adversity is part of a greater plan and that true strength is revealed in how one responds to life's toughest challenges.

Today, Jackson is committed to continuing his wrestling career at Purdue University, a goal that once seemed out of reach but now stands as a symbol of his perseverance. More importantly, he has turned his experience into a mission to serve others. Drawing from his own struggles, Jackson goes out of his way to support injured teammates, offering encouragement, perspective, and a reminder that no one has to face hardship alone. His story is not just about an incredible comeback, but also about leadership, compassion, and the courage to meet life's storms head-on, emerging stronger and more determined to make an impact on those around him.

### **Hannah Wittgren (Eastern Hancock)**

Throughout **Hannah Wittgren's** high school career, she faced a series of significant injuries that would have sidelined many athletes for good. From nerve damage in her foot and ankle as a freshman to multiple surgeries, a torn meniscus, and ultimately an ACL tear, Hannah endured four major surgeries and years of physical and mental challenges that kept her off the field more often than on it. Yet, time and again, she refused to let those setbacks define her story. Instead, she met each obstacle with determination, grit, and a commitment to come back stronger.

Even while navigating the demands of recovery, Hannah remained dedicated in every aspect of her life. She balanced rehabilitation with her academics, maintaining a perfect 4.0 GPA and finishing among the top five percent of her class. Her resilience was not just physical, but also mental and emotional, as she continued to push forward during some of the most difficult moments of her journey.

Hannah's impact extends far beyond her personal accomplishments. She exemplified true sportsmanship by embracing a leadership role regardless of her ability to compete. Whether on the field or the sideline, she chose to be her teammates' biggest supporter, always encouraging, uplifting, and leading by example. Her presence helped shape a positive and resilient team culture built on accountability and encouragement.

Off the field, Hannah has demonstrated an equally strong commitment to serving others. Through her involvement with the Neighborhoods Against Substance Abuse youth council, she has helped educate and mentor younger students and organize community events focused on prevention and awareness. She has also dedicated her time to volunteering at youth sports camps, helping young athletes grow in both skill and confidence while giving back to the programs that shaped her. Whether supporting her community, mentoring others, or lending a hand to those in need, Hannah consistently looks for ways to make a positive impact.

Through years of adversity, Hannah realized that true strength is revealed not in moments of success, but in how one responds to challenges. Her perseverance ultimately came full circle when she achieved her goal of earning the opportunity to continue her softball career at Huntington University. Her journey is a remarkable testament to resilience, perseverance, and unwavering character in the face of repeated adversity.

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***About the IHSAA Foundation, Inc.***

*The IHSAA Foundation was created in 2015 as the philanthropic arm of the IHSAA. Its mission is to help protect, sustain, and nurture high school sports in Indiana for the 409 high schools it serves. The 17-member Foundation Board is made up of member-school superintendents from each of the three IHSAA districts, at minimum two member-school athletic directors, the Chair of the IHSAA Executive Committee, the current IHSAA Commissioner, and 11 at-large members from all corners of the state. Members of the Board are nominated by IHSAA Commissioner, Paul Neidig, and ratified by Board Approval.*

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***About the Indiana High School Athletic Association, Inc. (IHSAA)***

*The IHSAA is a voluntary, not-for-profit organization that is self-supporting without the use of tax monies. Since its founding in 1903, the Association's mission has been to provide wholesome, educational athletics for the secondary schools of Indiana. Its 409-member high schools - public, institutional, parochial, and private - pay no annual membership fee or incur entry fees to play in the Association's tournaments. A state tournament series is conducted annually in 24 sports, 11 for girls, 11 for boys and two co-eds (unified flag football, unified track and field). A 19-person board of directors, elected by member school principals, governs the organization.*