



LONG ISLAND
JUNIOR SOCCER LEAGUE

Scholarship Awards Breakfast



Class of 2017

July 16, 2017 Huntington Hilton



Program

Welcome

Lynn Scarpati
Chairperson Scholarship Committee

Pledge of Allegiance

Joan Connor

Blessing

Michael D'Ambrosio

Breakfast

Presentation of Scholarship Awards

Closing Remarks

Lynn Scarpati

About the Scholarship Awards

We are privileged to present these 29 awards to some of the finest student athletes in LIJSL. Although 18 of these scholarship awards are memorial awards, these scholarships memorialize 14 individuals for the way they lived, rather than defining them by the way they died. These individuals had a passion for life and soccer was part of life.

We are proud of the corporate and foundation support that enables LIJSL to expand these awards.

The contributions made by individuals and organizations enable LIJSL to provide these scholarship awards, which honor these exceptional young adults.



Scholarship Awards

Presenters

Recipients

Erica & Peter Harold	Jillian Colucci, Bobbi Marks Memorial Scholarship
Erica & Peter Harold	Kiara Birch, Bobbi Marks Memorial Scholarship
Erica & Peter Harold	Maya Voytelmgum, Bobbi Marks Memorial Scholarship
Richard Frazita	Erica Viscovich, Eileen Frazita Memorial Scholarship-Female Student Athlete
Joan Connor	Emma Pinezich, Addie Mattei-Iaia Presidential Scholarship
Pat Grecco	Emily Jonas, Pat Grecco Scholarship
Chris Scarpati	Sean Madden, Michael Scarpati Memorial Scholarship
Chris Scarpati	Matthew Sloan, Matthew Scarpati Memorial Scholarship
Joan Connor	Steven Libretti, Eurosport Scholarship
Lincoln Page	Malena Farber, Sandra Atlas Bass Scholarship
Lincoln Page	Claudia Urquiza, Carolyn Page Memorial Scholarship
Frank Vertullo	Keara Brown, The Frank & Michael Vertullo Foundation Scholarship
Frank Vertullo	Victoria Thurer, The Frank & Michael Vertullo Foundation Scholarship
Joan Connor	Sean Walsh, Modell's Scholarship
Lynn Scarpati	Daniel Sparkowski, Sean Urda Memorial Scholarship
Maria Morelli	Amanda Spitaleri, Dalia Morelli Memorial Scholarship
Lisa Amoroso	Brian Killian, Rocco Amoroso Sportsmanship Award Scholarship
Bill Roller	Rose Savocchi, Frank Gorman Memorial Scholarship
Randy Vogt	Jordan Anderson, Joseph Lombardo Memorial Scholarship
Pat Grecco	Maria Aruanna, Peter C. Collins Presidential Scholarship
Randy Vogt	Kristen Shine, John Pinezich Memorial Scholarship
Pat & Mark Secko	Blake Aronson, Michael Secko Memorial Scholarship
Addie Mattie-Iaia	Daniel Urli, Jonathan Marc Serota Memorial Scholarship
Lynn & Jim Scarpati	John Bingham, Miles for Matt Foundation Scholarship
Lynn & Jim Scarpati	Dylan Hupert, Miles for Matt Foundation Scholarship
Lynn & Jim Scarpati	Michael Maceluch, Miles for Matt Foundation Scholarship
AnnMarie Toth	Suzanne Espey, George Hoffman TopSoccer Volunteer Scholarship
AnnMarie Toth	Justin Tollin, George Hoffman TopSoccer Volunteer Scholarship
AnnMarie Toth	Shelbi Wuss, Modell's TopSoccer Volunteer Scholarship



Bobbie Marks Memorial Scholarship

Bobbie Marks was born in Nottinghamshire, England in July of 1923. She grew up in the small village of Attenboro with her mother, father, older sister, and a pony named Snowflake. Growing up in Nottinghamshire, her family was a strong supporter of the Nottingham Forest Football Team.

During World War II, she was a young adult. In 1943, she met an American soldier who was stationed near her home. They eventually fell in love and were married at St. Mary's Church, Attenboro, England, in October 1945. While serving in England, Bobbie's husband, David, was introduced to English football by his father-in-law, who took him to a Nottingham Forest game.

At the war's end, Bobbie and her husband, David, returned to the United States to start their new life together. They eventually settled in Port Washington with their two children. Bobbie was an avid sports fan. She loved to watch ice skating, tennis, golf and soccer.

When her grandchildren started to play soccer in the LIJSL, she was happy to hear about their games. As they became older and better players, Bobbie started to learn how the game could really help young people grow into responsible young men and women. Soccer helped her grand-daughter get a scholarship to a great university.

Bobbie loved coming to the annual LIJSL convention, where she learned of all the activities going on within the league. At that point, she realized she wanted to contribute something to the lives of the young people involved in this sport of soccer. With the help of her husband, David, they decided to start giving to the league in various ways. At first they contributed to the Special Children's program. Then, they established the Bobbie and David Marks Family Scholarship Fund for promising young men and women.

She loved coming to the Scholarship Brunches and meeting the young people. She was always impressed with their accomplishments and aspirations. In September of 2004, Bobbie passed away, and is dearly missed by her family. To honor her memory, the Bobbie and David Marks Scholarship Fund has been renamed the Bobbie Marks Memorial Scholarship Fund.



Jillian Colucci

Jillian is a 2017 graduate of Vandermuelen High School, where she played varsity soccer for five years, and was captain for three years. Jillian has been a member of the Lake Grove-Newfield Tsunami. Academically, Jillian has an SAT Score of 1390 and a weighted GPA of 100. She has received awards that include AP Scholar with Honors, News 12 Scholar Athlete and a member of the National Honor Society. Jillian has been recognized by being named All Conference/All League for five years, All County for four years, League VII Player of the Year for two years, Suffolk County Player of the year in 2016 and NYS Class C Player of the Year 2015 and 2016, All State 2013-2016 NSCAA All-Region 2014-2016 and NSCAA All-American 2015-2016. In addition, Jillian played Varsity Basketball for 5 years, captain in her Senior year.

In her essay, Jillian wrote, "For as long as I can remember, standing on the sidelines of my brothers' games, there was no doubt that I would follow in their footsteps and play soccer. And I would do it just as well too, because, in my mind, I was no different than them. It just never occurred to me that I really was. They are both more than a head taller and at least 100 pounds heavier, like nearly all of my opponents on the soccer field. My size has always been a challenge, but it has never discouraged me. In fact, I use that as motivation... Soccer has continued to shape my values and attitude toward life. I have always been a driven person, but playing soccer has uncovered a level of confidence and ambition that I never knew existed. Aside from pushing me and, at times, knocking me down, soccer has shown me that I can always persevere..."

Coach Frank Stagnitta wrote, "...I've been a personal witness to how hard she has worked to get where she has gotten... As a player, Jillian is a great example. She works harder than anyone and does her job as well as she possibly can all the time, regardless of who's watching... She worked countless hours doing plyometrics to get more explosive and never gave up. Two years later, after continually reaching out to schools, she persisted and finally found a home at Marist... Jillian volunteers her time with me several hours a week assisting me with my younger travel teams. She enjoys making a difference and helping be a part of another's growth."

Jillian is one of three recipients of the **Bobbi Marks Memorial Scholarship** and will continue her education and soccer career at Marist College and hopes to pursue a teaching career.

In Jillian's words:

"I believe I grew up with a ball at my feet, I will head to Marist College in the fall to continue playing the game I love. My greatest assets are energy, focus, and determination."



Kiara Birch

Kiara is a 2017 graduate and Valedictorian of the Humanities & The Arts Magnet High School, where she played varsity soccer for four years. Kiara has been a member of the Cambria Heights Panthers.

In her essay, Kiara wrote, “At 12 years old, I started training with the U-12 Cambria Heights Kickers soccer team because my older sister had joined the U-19 women’s team. It was hard to catch up and fit in, especially since all the other kids grew up together. I was at a disadvantage and they knew it, so they ignored me....so I started training with the U-19 women’s team along with my sister... Training with these girls, especially during scrimmages, was like trying to chase down a squirrel for his acorn: absolutely impossible....I worked long and hard to develop my skills to become a better player...I eventually became captain for the Cambria Heights Kickers U-19 team, went to Spain as a PSAL representative in soccer, was selected for the PSAL Mayor’s Cup 2016 for soccer and was selected as a PSAL MVP Scholar-Athlete for the borough of Queens...I apply everything that I’ve learned throughout my years of sports to a new challenge: teaching children at the Beacon 226 program how to play soccer; a program I’ve participated in since I was 5 years old...I use the values that I’ve learned from soccer to keep them fit and help them to become hardworking and determined individuals.”

Coach Lascelles Aboagye wrote, “...I allowed her to attend practice as her sister was on the team. I immediately noticed her love for the sport; but most conspicuously she always carried a book...She showed up for the team in her freshman year and had an electrifying season; she demonstrated a hunger for the game that resulted in her finishing among the top ten freshman city wide. She scored 27 goals along with numerous assists. Her determination propelled the team into the playoffs for the first time. Again, I also observed that she was always reading a book-usually a different title every week. During her four-year tenure at the Campus, Ms. Birch participated in four varsity sports: soccer, tennis, indoor track and outdoor track...”

Kiara is one of three recipients of the **Bobbi Marks Memorial Scholarship** and will continue her education and play soccer and run track at Adelphi University, where she plans to major in biology.

Kiara’s personal statement and favorite quote:

Kiara shared, “I like to sing, but I have stage fright.” And the quote she lives by is:

**“In the moment when I truly understand my enemy, understand him well enough to defeat him, then in that very moment I also love him. I think it’s impossible to really understand somebody, what they want, what they believe, and not love them the way they love themselves.”
- Orson Scott Card, Ender’s Game**



Maya Voytelmgum

Maya is a 2017 graduate of Valley Stream High School, where she played varsity soccer for two years. Maya has been a member of the Valley Stream Vipers. Academically Maya has an SAT Score of 1340 and a weighted GPA of 102. Maya was named an Outstanding Senior Scholar Athlete by the Nassau County Girls Soccer Coaches Association. She is a member of six honor societies-Math, History, Language, Athletic Tri-M and National Honor Societies and is ranked third in her class. She is Class Council President, Cultural Society Co-President and Science Honor Society President and an active volunteer with Valley Stream Youth Council.

In her essay, Maya wrote, “Through soccer I have learned how to persevere and never give up, even if all odds seem to be against you...Soccer has also taught me that if you really want something you have to work to get it...Soccer has also helped to build leadership within me. I have been captain of teams but that is just one aspect of leadership soccer has helped me develop. A key part of soccer is communication on the field. I have been on teams with amazingly skilled players, but we couldn’t manage to play to our full potential because of communication...As a goalie, I see the whole so I frequently am the first and most predominant person to talk on the field...”

Coach Demetri Adrahtas wrote, “...Her work ethic is unparalleled. She has consistently impressed me as a dedicated student-athlete, responsible young lady and genuine friend to her peers.....

Maya has sacrificed time and again for her teammates by playing any position needed. She is a unique varsity player that has played in goal, in the backfield, in the midfield and at forward. Maya is and will continue to be an asset to any team...”

Maya is one of three recipients of the **Bobbi Marks Memorial Scholarship** and will continue her education at Stony Brook University.

In Maya’s words:

“My plans for the future is to be a marine biologist and help build a sustainable future. I’m very passionate about the environment and living a sustainable lifestyle. I believe the environmental issues should be a primary concern”.



Eileen Frazita

Memorial Scholarship Female Student Athlete

Eileen Frazita was born in Brooklyn on April 13, 1940, a descendent of two ancient Irish clans, O'Leahtobhair (Lalor) and Ó' Broin (Byrne). She grew up in Bedford Stuyvesant, graduating in 1958 from Bishop McDonald Memorial High School. An enthusiastic Brooklyn Dodger fan, she was unaware of the beautiful game except for a few tales her mother spoke of a distant Irish relative named Willy Lynn, supposedly a famous soccer

Married in 1960 to Richard (Dick to their soccer friends), they began their 54 years of married life in Deer Park, where they raised two boys, Richard Edward followed by Stephen five years later. Their home was a few blocks from a neighborhood park, with a baseball diamond and football field and a full size dirt soccer pitch for the U19 boys who were just getting started in a fledging LIJSL league under Commissioner Jack Maher's initiative.

In 1969, Saints Cyril and Methodius CYO held registration for the coming fall season and for the first time included soccer for young boys due to Jack's urging. Eileen wasn't fond of little league baseball or football, too much adult pressure and possible injury, so Eileen was curious about this other alternative for young Richard. That evening, Eileen and Dick met Jack and a few other coaches, George Beigler and Chris Halpin and shortly became good friends with a common goal – establish this sport at the youth level here in America. It became clear in short order that these well intentioned men needed lots of help and Eileen and Dick both jumped in on the organizational side, hook line and sinker. In the process, Eileen became an enthusiastic soccer mom, met so many new friends and became a fixture and leader in the parish soccer program. Excellent with people and having the patience to deal with the growing pains, everyone knew and respected her for her fair and friendly way. Jack Maher's dream became a reality and in a few years with the help many others, the Deer Park Celtics Soccer CYO was a well-funded, well coached and recognized successful intramural and travel team program which overtook the other organized sports in enthusiasm, numbers and coverage in the local papers. Even Marco Malusa's young team from Glen Cove played in our intramural league as it became well known on the Island. Eileen was keeper of the keys to the park's lighting system which the Town of Babylon donated due to the lobbying effort of our growing program and friends in Town Government. For years, she fed many a coach coming back from evening practice in exchange for returning the keys and good dinner talk about the teams.

Not content with the boys having all the fun, Eileen decided it was time for the girls of Deer Park. She recruited and coached their first girls' team in the mid '70's. Initially, there were only a few others on LI, nevertheless lively competition developed among Deer Park, Hicksville (Ann Camara), Massapequa (Lisa Gosley) and East Meadow (Manfreid Weirich). Following that first year of competition, more club programs sprung up and the girl's division of LIJSL became firmly established, just as other similar programs were emerging across the country. History speaks to the amazing progression of women's soccer at all age and skill levels, culminating in a major milestone in 1991 when the United States won the first ever FIFA Women's World Cup.

Eileen was elected to the LIJSL board of directors in 1978. With help of steady volunteers, she successfully managed the summer tournaments at CW Post for years. Peter Collins then asked Eileen to manage the Boys Select Team Program. This became her signature achievement for the league. She applied her talents towards a higher level of team excellence by recruiting college coaches, provided them with resources and a modest financial incentive in return for commitment and accountability, and most importantly instituted a fair and open player selection proces, while managing the coaches and the daily business of the program. Her accomplishment is noteworthy as a significant step towards the evolution of the LIJSL Select Team initiative into today's PDP program. In 1987, Eileen received the LIJSL Gordon Bradley award and is an LIJSL Hall of Fame member.

Sadly, she passed on June 9, 2014. Eileen would be delighted that this award is going to an outstanding female student athlete of the beautiful game.



Erica Viscovich

Erica is a graduate of St. Francis Preparatory School, and received the Student Athlete Award for Varsity soccer and a scholarship for her senior semesters. Since 2007, Erica played in the LIJSL with the Auburndale SC for 21 consecutive seasons. Academically, Erica is a stellar student, graduating with a combined twelve honors and Advanced Placement classes, an ACT Composite Score of 32 and a cumulative GPA of 97, placing her in the top 6% of her class. Erica is a member of the National Honor Society, and Honor Societies for Math (National), History and Foreign Language. She rose to leadership positions, elected President of the National Honor Society by her peers, President of the Croatian Club, retreat leader and leader for the Midnight run. Erica is passionately compassionate and gives much of her available time to support many worthy causes and community service, so much so that she received The Franciscan Service Scholarship, given to exceptional students whose altruistic ideals are demonstrated by their actions and outstanding achievements in the field of service. Erica has been strong in her faith at school, participating in the Campus Ministry, Drug and Alcohol Prevention Team, PS4 Big Brother/Sister Program, Peer Tutor and Homework Assistance Program, and volunteering at a nursing home and soup kitchens. Erica is also a member of the Ski Club and Wall Street Club.

Coach Chansel Traill wrote, "Erica usually plays forward. However, she is very adaptable and can play in other positions as well. I know I can count on her to fill in wherever she is needed ...she is a leader both on and off the field. If she notices something not working she will address it immediately. At practices, I sometimes have her demonstrate drills for her teammates. Erica is very optimistic, both as a player and person..."

St. Francis Prep's Director of Counseling, Robyn Armon wrote, "Erica defines what it means to be a student athlete. As a player and assistant coach for a local team, Erica displays qualities of sportsmanship, respect, leadership and perseverance. She knows what it means to be a team player on and off the field. Erica surrounds herself with kind individuals like her and attracts the same positive energy she exudes."

In her essay, Erica states, "I attribute my positivity and hard work I learned from soccer to much of my success in other areas of my life. In school, I have the same determination that I do in soccer. I work hard not because I have to, but because I want to....My hard work in school has led me to receive the Scholar Athlete Award for the Varsity Soccer Team. This award was extremely important to me because it connected and reflected my success in two of the most important things in my life-soccer and education..."

Erica is the recipient of the **Eileen Frazita Memorial Scholarship for a Female Student Athlete** and will continue her education at George Washington University and hopes to play club soccer.

In Erica's words:

"At GW, I will be studying International Affairs and Politics. I eventually want to go to law school. My dream job is to serve in the United States House of Representatives. I hope to continue to play soccer at the club level in college."

Favorite quote: "Be the change that you wish to see in the world."



Addie Mattei-Taia Presidential Scholarship

In 29 years of dedicating herself to youth soccer on Long Island, Addie Mattei-Taia touched nearly every aspect of the game. It started in Smithtown, where she continued to coach and then helped co-found the Smithtown Soccer Club. Later, she created, organized, and ran the Smithtown International Tournament that brought teams from around the world to Long Island.

Soon she was volunteering at the league level, where amongst many other things, she served for 25 years as the chairperson of the LIJSL Convention. Addie served on the LIJSL Board of Directors for 18 years, and in 2004 she succeeded Peter Collins as president of the league.

In ten years under her watch, the league's enrollment grew annually, and she increased sponsorships and revenues to support league programs like TOPSoccer, the Scholarship Program, the Player Development Program and more. Addie also spearheaded an agreement with the New York Red Bulls that allowed the LIJSL's top players to take part in the MLS club's Regional Developmental School. She also made improvements to the Peter C. Collins Soccer Park in Plainview, making it one of the finest soccer only facilities in the region, provided support to families and soccer communities in need after 9/11 and Hurricane Sandy, and secured a new office facility for the league.

Addie continues to serve as vice president of the ENYYSA. She has been recognized as an ENYYSA and LIJSL hall of fame inductee, and in 2007 she was honored as the USYSA Region I Administrator of the Year.



Emma Pinezich

Emma is a 2017 graduate of Long Island Lutheran High School, where she played varsity soccer for five years, a starter for four and was captain in her senior year. Emily has been a member of the Lake Grove-Newfield Blue Fury and Tsunami. Academically Emily has an SAT Score of 1360 and a weighted GPA of 100. She is a member of the National Honor Society. Emma has been recognized by being named All Conference (2x), Coaches Award and MVP. In addition, Emma played Varsity Lacrosse for 4 years. She has also participated with French Club, Student Govern-

ment, Legenda, Mathletes and HART Club. She plays the clarinet and piano and has had her artwork displayed at Long Island Art League and at Huntington Public Library. She has volunteered Habitat for Humanity, Hope for Humanity Haiti, Be the Blessing Day, the annual Creedmoor Christmas Party and spent 10 days in Nicaragua repairing houses and buildings for the community.

In her essay, Emma wrote, "One of the greatest lessons I've learned from playing soccer over the years is the value and power of hard work and tenacity in the face of a bigger and faster competition. It is easy to be told when you are little that if you set your mind to anything, you can accomplish it. However, I can recount many times-in the playoff finals with my high school team, at regionals with my club team, and many more-that I felt utterly gyped that my team and I had worked so hard and tirelessly against our opponent and yet the score left us empty-handed and unrewarded for our sacrifices. I've questioned the power we as individuals hold against a powerful and often dark world, just as I questioned in those moments the power I had on a 150 x 75 yard soccer field. However, I know more than the score or any trophy I could receive, one thing rings true: that at the end of each day, all that we have is the work we put in. I know that this has traveled into many other areas of my life, where I push myself to work my hardest and give my all regardless of the outcome.

Coach Frank Stagnitta wrote, "When Emma first joined or team it was a big step up from her previous team, but she was interested in taking her game to the next level...What I have witnessed, as a true testament to her character, is an individual who would not take "no" for an answer. Emma has improved vastly and in almost every facet of the game she has managed to make leaps and bounds. Despite a fairly uphill battle, on a very competitive team, she has been very determined to continue improving, and struggling against bigger and faster players. However, despite these obstacles Emma has never dialed it in, or given up. She has been persistent in striving to achieve her goals and I have watched as they have paid off. She now has offers to play soccer in several different colleges...."

Emily is the recipient of the **Addie Mattei-Iaia Presidential Scholarship** and will continue her education at the University of Vermont.

In Emily's words:

"I am passionate about helping others and making the world a better place- whether it be through art, policy, education, or many other ways. I hope to pursue these goals by joining the peace corps after college and by pursuing art and social sciences at Vermont and in my future."



Pat Grecco Scholarship

Pat Grecco is the quintessential volunteer and LIJSL players, parents and leadership have often been the beneficiaries. Pat joined the Scholarship Committee in 1991 and was Chair of the committee from 2000 through 2013, leaving this post only because of her relocation to North Carolina. Pat is a 30+ year volunteer within the soccer community and was inducted into the Eastern New York State Soccer Hall of Fame in 2008 and The Long Island Junior Soccer League's Hall of Fame in 1998. Pat has been the Director of College Bound Player Program for the LIJSL, serving as Director of Girls LIJSL ODP, Exceptional Senior Games and Scholarship Committee. Pat and her husband Frank Sr. have three children; Ellen Grecco-Gilmore of Fairfield, CT, who played club and Varsity soccer and graduated from Fordham University, Beth Grecco-Gothers of East Granby, CT, who was a National Pool Player and received a full scholarship to The University of Connecticut and was a 3 X All-America Selection and Frank Jr. of Cary, NC, played collegiately at The United States Naval Academy where he was a four-year Varsity soccer player and later served six years in the United States Marine Corps. A genuine soccer family, Frank Sr. was a long-time soccer referee.

Pat has personally helped more players get to college, many with full scholarships... than anyone on this planet. Mrs. Grecco has volunteered thousands of hours of her time and always finds time to help a disadvantaged family with a difficult problem. She is currently working to identify Hispanic players in her region who need help with the college search process, sometimes offering pro-bono help to anyone who asks; however, in recent years, a spinoff of her volunteer work, came about. In addition to Soccer, Lacrosse and Football, she has worked with numerous student-athletes, representing nearly every sport, as well as lesser-known sports such as Fencing, Rifle/Pistol, Crew, Cheerleading and even Chess, to name a few. It gives her great pleasure to help others, be they the best athletes, best students, or perhaps a student who struggles in school. She has worked with a diverse group of student/athletes, including a home-schooled soccer player from Florida to many international soccer players, placing a female soccer player from Bangkok, Thailand to Hofstra University on scholarship. Best of all and it is true, she does boast a 100% success rate. "There is a school for everyone to play at as well as to study, that's what makes America such a great country."

When asked the true value of her work, Pat continually replies "my most important offering is to find the very best academic opportunities for the student athletes I work with. Using their sport to open the heavy door of the admissions process and finding money to pay for it."



Emily Jonas

Emily is a 2017 graduate of Hicksville High School, where she has played varsity soccer for 5 years, and was named All-County twice. Emily is a member of HBC United. Emily has been a member of LIJSL PDP, PDP Select, ENY State ODP and Region I Soccer. Emily was named to Newsday Long Island Top 50 to Watch. Emily is a member of the National Honor Society, Science Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, and a Scholar Student Athlete. Emily volunteers in her school and community through Safe Halloween, Homecoming events, freshman orientation, Senior Citizens Luncheon, painting windows at McDonalds and feeding the homeless with Michael's Angels.

In her essay, Emily wrote, "Ultimately, soccer has also taught me not to take things for granted. In 2016, I was fortunate enough to go to Costa Rica to play with the Region I Soccer Team. While here I came face to face with people who suffered from poverty. As we visited a community center for young children, I came to the realization that I am so lucky to live in the United States and to have the opportunities and people who care so deeply for me. This trip really opened my eyes to the other side of living and I am forever grateful for that trip and the lessons I was provided...Soccer has definitely been a huge part of my life...It has helped define me as the person I was, I am and am becoming...I will continue to use these attributes to discover more about myself and to further on pursue my future in the medical field."

Coach Tom Hayes wrote, "As the Head Coach of the 16's during camp and the selection process for the Regional Pool of players, it was easy to see what a good player Emily was/is. The striking thing about Emily was her level of hard work, her openness to new ideas and ways to approach the game, learn and develop as a player and especially how good she was with other players, always playing the role as a leader. Emily was always encouraging the other players and being directive in a positive tone to help them raise their level of play...I also appreciate how painstakingly Emily researched and went about choosing a college to pursue her education as well as play soccer."

Emily is the recipient of the **Pat Grecco Scholarship** and will continue her education and play soccer at Gardner-Webb University, where she plans to major in biology.

In Emily's words:

"I will be continuing my soccer career next year at Gardner-Webb University in North Carolina which is division 1. I am a part of several honor societies and will be graduating in the top 10% of my class. I aspire to go into the medical field and visit countries that are in need of medical help. I owe most thanks to all my coaches, my parents, sister and brother for always being there for me and for pushing me one step closer to achieving my dreams."



Michael B. Scarpatti

Memorial Goalkeeper Scholarships

(January 3, 1981-May 14, 2001)

Born at 9 lbs. 12 ½ oz and happy, Michael embraced life and people with arms wide open from that moment and all of the moments of the rest of his life. His bear hugs became legendary in our family.

He began to play baseball, tennis and soccer at the age of six and was one of the youngest competitors on the Half Hollow Hills Swim Team. Somewhere along the way, soccer became his passion.

About the age of 10, his abilities as a keeper began to show. He understood the game, loved the people he met and enjoyed the places soccer took him, - Columbia, MD, Springfield, VA, Coco, FL, State Cup Finals, Regionals, England, Chaminade High School and Bryant College. He was the biggest supporter of his two younger brothers and always shared the goalkeeper's perspective with his field player brothers.

Michael enjoyed working with the younger players, trying to give them the benefit of some of his hard won experience. Paul Riley said that Mike had something no one could teach, - he had passion and heart.

Mike died suddenly on May 14, 2001, the day after Mother's Day at the age of 20. There is a void for all who loved him that can never be filled. We had a glimpse into his future and only saw promise.



Sean Madden

Sean is a 2017 graduate of St. John the Baptist Diocesan High School, where he played junior varsity soccer for two years and varsity soccer for two years. Sean has been a member of the East Islip Soccer Club Rebels and EISC Warriors. Sean has received Best Defense Award, a Scholar Athlete for four years, and an All-League Award. Academically Sean has a weighted GPA of 91. Sean has helped his community by volunteering as an Altar Server, Summer Bible School Counselor, Peanut Butter & Jelly Gang, Special Olympics and Holiday Toy Drive.

In his essay, Sean wrote, "Do the two of you want to play soccer? 'Yes', I said, 'but I'm going to be a professional baseball player when I grow up, not a soccer player.' We were 4 years old at the time. Little did I know how important soccer would become in my life...This awesome game of soccer that I have been playing for years, 4 years as a field player and 10 years as a goalkeeper, has taught me many life lessons and has shaped my character in a positive way that will stay with me for the rest of my life. Soccer is all about self-discipline, teamwork, which involves getting everyone to work together to achieve the same "goal", having respect for yourself, teammates, your opponents, and the referees, good sportsmanship, learning how to win and lose with dignity and remembering that every second counts in a game, so don't give up...As a goalkeeper in soccer, I have learned how to be a strong vocal leader. This is essential when it comes to directing your team in order to achieve a win. Not only have I learned how to lead, I know how to take directions from other people. I feel that I have developed and will continue to develop into the best goalkeeper I can be! When I get out onto the field I can guarantee I am the hardest working player at all times, I love my position as goalkeeper..."

Coach Stephen Bermingham wrote, "As a coach, I always look for leadership, especially when playing in big games. Sean always displayed leadership on our team and the game was never too big for him. We won multiple Cups, League Divisions and Tournaments through the years and having Sean Madden as part of our team was a very important part of our success." One of Sean's happiest memories of playing for Coach Bermingham was a trip a one week trip to Ireland, where they trained with and played against 3 U-13 teams.

Sean is the recipient of the **Michael B. Scarpati Memorial Goalkeeper Scholarship** and will continue his education and athletic career at Mount Saint Mary's College, with an eye toward a career in criminology or sports management/physical therapy.

Words that Sean lives by:

"You can do anything you put your mind to.", wisdom shared by his father.

Fun Fact: The Madden Brothers take Mount Saint Mary's College. Sean will go to college with his twin brother, William, who found success in running. William will be continuing his athletic career at Mount Saint Mary's College too.



Matthew Logan Scarpati
June 26, 1990 to July 20, 2009

Glory, Glory Matt United! Matt's favorite team was Manchester United. It pained him greatly that his cousins are Chelsea fans. With his first nephew born on June 1, 2009, he looked forward to teaching him how to wear the appropriate jersey and cheer for the appropriate teams. That will never happen because a drunk and speeding motorcyclist left the Wantagh State Parkway, at approximately 100mph and collided with Matt, who was out for a bike ride and had stopped to fix a flat on the Wantagh State Bike Path. He attended the 2009 LIJSL Scholarship Awards on 7/19/09.

Matthew L. Scarpati

Memorial Scholarship

Matt is the youngest of four boys, all of whom played soccer. Soccer was a passport to many places from Italy and England to Maryland, California, Pennsylvania, Virginia and New Jersey. Matthew was a 2008 graduate of Half Hollow Hills High School East and had completed a vigorous academic freshman year at the University at Buffalo. He made friends easily, but he always seemed to have a center compass. He loved all sports-soccer, lacrosse, tennis, golf, basketball and cycling. He made excellent choices in his friends.

Matt started with Northport Soccer Club, since they had a program for four year-olds. He played travel for Northport, Brentwood United, Auburndale Supersonics and East Meadow Jets. Matt was selected as an alternate for the ENYSSA ODP team and played with LIJSL ODP team. He played varsity soccer for Half Hollow Hills East and was a co-captain in his senior year. He played JV and Varsity lacrosse as well. He wanted to play soccer in college. However, the schools that were thinking of Matt were not the schools Matt wanted to attend. A fractured and dislocated ankle in his senior year of high school made that decision a sound one. When he had completed two surgeries and physical therapy at the end of October 2008, he was able to play some intramural soccer at the University at Buffalo. He said he had forgotten how much he loved playing and he was determined to get back in the game, working out with a friend from his dorm.

Matt was an Economics major at UB, loved Disney World, video games, music, fun and cooking. Yet he could be serious about politics, faith and fashion issues. He was a Renaissance Man. I was not totally surprised to learn that he was a Sunday evening regular at the UB Newman Center for Mass and pledged Pi Lambda Phi. He was a wonderful blend of curiosity, generosity. He was a best friend to his family and friends. He had just finished reading "Liberty and Tyranny" and "The Three Musketeers" and had Wealth of Nations on deck for the next read. He was working as a doorman at 24 Gramercy Park South during the summer of 2009 and was enjoying the eclectic group of people that he met.



Matthew Sloan

Matthew is a 2017 graduate of Hicksville High School, where he played varsity soccer for five years, and was captain for four years. Matt has been a member of the Massapequa Aces and has played ENY State ODP and Region 1 Team. Academically Matt has a weighted GPA of 94. Matt is a member of the National Honor Society, Social Studies Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society and Interact Club. Matt was Student Government President and Class of 2017 Treasurer. Matt has volunteered at Future Stars, Safe Haven, Senior Citizen Luncheon and Boots on the Ground. Matt has received multiple soccer awards, including NCSCA All American, All-Region(x2), All-State(x3) and All County (x4). Matt has been named Conference Defensive Player of the Year, Conference Offensive Player of the Year and Conference Player of the Year.

In his essay, Matt wrote, “The biggest thing for the development of my character was playing with older players. Whether it was my brother’s team in training or the older PDP teams, playing with the older kids was what I needed to better myself. I was forced not only to better myself as soccer player but also a person. The older the players I played with, the more respect that was demanded by them. I had to learn quickly to mature myself mentally and socially in order to succeed at that age and level. Whether it was playing with older players or traveling overseas, the opportunities in which I have had due to soccer have pushed me out of my comfort zone.”

Coach Scott Starkey wrote, “As a player, Matt is special. Every time he steps on the field, he is the fastest, strongest, has the best touch, and understands the most. He is truly a unique talent and the best player I’ve coached...Matt is not just a gifted physical player. As captain for four years, he was the team’s leader. Every player looked to him for guidance and inspiration and I looked to him, as a fine young man, to help run the team and be a third coach on the field.”

Matt is the recipient of the **Matthew Scarpati Memorial Scholarship** and will continue his education and athletic career at American University and plans to major in psychology or sociology.

Eurosport Scholarship

Eurosport is the sponsor of the Long Island Junior Soccer League in cooperation with adidas. They are a major sponsor of the LIJSL annual convention and supporting sponsors of almost every other LIJSL program from TOPSoccer Special Children's program to LIJSL PDP. Thanks to the generosity of Eurosport and adidas we are able to continue many of the programs that help to develop and benefit our young athletes.



Steven Libretti

Steven is a 2017 graduate of Connetquot High School, where he played on the junior varsity team. Steven is a member of the Ronkonkoma Rush. Academically, Steven has a weighted GPA of 99. Steven is a member of the National Honor Society, Foreign Language Honor Society and Tri-M Honor Society. He has volunteered for Athletes Helping Athletes, Habitat for Humanity and Breaking Boundaries. Steven has coached K-5 student sports activities for Connetquot Sports Camp.

In his essay, Steven wrote, "The game of soccer has shaped me into the person I am today because I have learned how to respect others during any situation and how to build lifelong friendships with people from all walks of life. While my skills evolved throughout the years, my views on sportsmanship broadened as my experience with the unfairness of other players intensified. Through the various levels of play, I've learned to respect others during the game of soccer, regardless if they respect you back. I'm able to take my experience with sportsmanship and teach young kids what it's like to play a sport respectfully when competition increases. I am able to do this through the Athletes Helping Athletes program my school runs. I was selected for this program because coordinators felt I exhibited leadership qualities...For the past two years I have gone to my school district's local elementary schools and talked to fifth graders regarding topics such as sportsmanship, bullying, drugs and alcohol...I am certain that soccer played an influential part of the person I am today and the person I will be in the future."

Mathematics Teacher, Susan Schiappa wrote, "Steven is a highly motivated, dedicated and determined young man who will work hard to learn any subject. His positive attitude and willingness to work are contributing factors to his academic and personal success. His level of maturity will enable him to set goals for himself and work until he achieves those goals."

Steven is the recipient of the **Eurosport Scholarship** and will continue his education at the University of New Haven and intends to play club soccer at college.

In Steven's words:

"I will be studying Forensic Science while attending the University of New Haven and hope to one day work with the FBI as a Crime Scene Investigator. I am interested in joining clubs during my college years where I can be a mentor to others, as well as clubs that give back to the community. Although I will miss my family and friends, I am looking forward to meeting new people and facing new challenges as I start the next chapter in my life as a college student living away from home."

The Sandra Atlas Bass and Edythe & Sol G. Atlas Fund, Inc. Scholarship

This scholarship award was established through the generosity of the Sandra Atlas Bass and Edythe & Sol G. Atlas Fund, Inc. A real estate executive and philanthropist, involved with many charities in the Long Island region, especially health care, youth development and animal welfare, founded the fund.



Malena Farber

Malena is a 2017 graduate of Northport High School, where she was actively involved in many aspects of Northport HS. Malena has been a member of the Northport Torpedoes and previously the Dix Hills Nitro. Academically Malena was an IB Diploma Candidate with a 4.0 GPA. Malena is a member of the National Honors Society and President, Grandfriends and President, Tri-M Honor Society and Interact Club. Malena has volunteered for Special Olympics and is Special Olympics Certified, Challenge Day, has been active in church with food drives, a mission trip and a First Responder Breakfast to name a few.

In her essay, Malena wrote, “Perseverance, sportsmanship, and dedication—three pillars of my character that have been set in stone since I started playing soccer in Kindergarten...My ability to persevere through an opponent’s lead and come back, to jump back up after falling, and to handle defeat with grace are abilities that have permeated into every aspect of my life...At the time I am writing this, I have been denied and waitlisted at my two top schools but my parents are more upset than me. Because I have experienced defeat before on the field, I know I will persevere, prosper, and be pleased no matter where I end up among my 8 spectacular options... My mindset has always been to give 120%. Many of my coaches have called me teachable, coachable, workable, and versatile. I’d personally like to add adaptable to that list...My sportsmanship has made me a peacemaker between friends, and the teamwork and strategy as well as goal setting skills I have attained will be imperative to a Biomedical Engineering degree and career...To persevere through good times and bad, to maintain a level head and love for the game through wins and losses, and to dedicate my time to what matters most are all things that have been built into my character through soccer.”

School Counselor Lenore Kmiotek wrote, “When Malena sees a challenge, it drives her to create a solution, making her one of the most motivated, creative and successful students I have ever known. Please accept my most sincere and enthusiastic recommendation for Malena Farber.”

Malena is the recipient of the **Sandra Atlas Bass Scholarship** and will continue her education at Drexel University.

In Malena words:

“I truly believe in service above self and is passionate about community service. For the last two years I have led Northport High School’s chapter of the National Honor Society as Vice President and President running the entire district’s peer tutoring program as well as helping to run our other events such as Senior Citizen Proms, blood drives, and Breast Cancer Awareness Days. I also play the flute and have led the marching band as a rank leader and officer. Lastly, I love to travel and have been, by the grace of God and my amazing parents, on nearly 40 flights, one of which was to Germany where I lived with a host family on a cultural exchange through rotary international the summer after my Freshman year. I cannot emphasize enough how grateful I am to have been chosen for this award.”



Carolyn Page Memorial Scholarship

Carolyn Page of the Massapequa Soccer Club left behind a tremendous legacy. Carolyn passed away after a fourteen-year battle with cancer but remains in the hearts of her husband, Lincoln Page and her three daughters, Lorraine, Cynthia and Pamela as well as all who knew her.

Carolyn began coaching her daughter when she was told, “if you don’t coach, there will be no team for your daughter to play on.” Carolyn coached for the Massapequa intramural program and later in the travel team program. She was involved with the Massapequa Memorial Day Tournament, specifically taking care of the trophy presentations.

Carolyn later became an administrator for Girls Select and was a chaperone for the distant tournaments. Carolyn was totally supportive of her husband and daughters, and took on any job necessary to help.

Lincoln mentioned that he could not have gone on to be President of Massapequa Soccer Club, Tournament Director, State Cup Commissioner, LIJSL Arbitration Board Chairman, only to name a few jobs he held, without the support of Carolyn. In fact, she used to say in jest, “I did all the work and he took all the glory.”

Carolyn, a true-soccer Mom/Wife, and consummate volunteer.



Claudia Urquiza

Claudia is a 2017 graduate of Oceanside High School, where she played on the junior varsity team in the 8th grade and was a four year member of the varsity soccer team. Claudia is a member of the Oceanside United Riptide, a recipient of Rudy Lamonica MVP Award, volunteers with “Big Buddies” and enjoys being a camp counselor, coaching children and teaching sportsmanship.

In her essay, Claudia wrote, “...I love the competitive side of the sport, but more than that I love the dedication it takes for a whole team to work together to achieve the ultimate goal. I believe that through this team building effort and collaboration it has helped shape my character in so many ways. I have great appreciation for the hard work and determination it takes to work with a team to accomplish an end result...soccer will always be a part of my life, even with this past year’s recent setbacks. Unfortunately, in June 2016, I tore the ACL in my right knee, while competing in one of my Travel Soccer games...I felt such a sense of loss and had many down moments. However, with the support and encouragement of my family, friends and doctors along with many hours of intense physical therapy sessions and my consistent perseverance, I am healing...More recently, however our family experienced a terrible house fire...My family and I are very grateful to have evacuated quickly and safely...Sadly, our home is completely gutted, not habitable and it is estimated that we will be back in our home in approximately 6 months to 1 year...I consider myself a strong self-determined person, but at a time when I should feel excited to look for and plan for colleges to attend, I am fighting this feeling of added financial strain...these tough times and life circumstances have definitely made me stronger, and given me a sense of maturity and knowing what is truly important. We, as a family, are focused on the positive and are determined to persevere.”

Michael Bruno, Social Studies wrote, “Claudia is a delightful bundle of complexity and wholesomeness! She is the type of student who, when absent, alters the dynamic of the class because you can palpably feel that some vital part of the dynamic is missing: the laugh, the wit, the smile and the memorable contribution that I and the class had grown fond of and accustomed to...How she finds the time and energy for Battle of the Classes, Sports Nite, charitable volunteerism at the school or firehouse, the innumerable tournaments and still have time for her warm supportive family in the capacity of babysitting her nieces and nephews is proof of her energy and diversity of interests...”

Claudia is the recipient of the **Carolyn Page Memorial Scholarship** and will continue her education and soccer career at Nassau Community College.

In Claudia’s words:

“My goal is to learn and study the aspects of the Health Science field. I plan to continue my higher education and transfer to LIU Post to pursue the career path for either Physical or Occupational Therapy.

Whether I am playing soccer, volunteering as a referee for the Oceanside pee-wee teams, or even just kicking around the ball in the backyard, teaching my younger brother (Joey),....soccer will ALWAYS be part of my life! I am so grateful and honored to receive this award.”

The Frank & Michael Vertullo Foundation Scholarships



The Frank & Michael Vertullo Foundation awards a scholarship to two students that participate in the Long Island Soccer League that have either

- 1) Personally supported or currently participate in a program(s) that help enrich the lives of people living with special needs or,

- 2) personally have mentored a person living with special needs to help them overcome their challenges and achieve personal successes.

It is our honor to help make your dreams come true.



Keara Brown

Keara is a 2017 graduate of Eastport South Manor High School, where she has played varsity soccer since the 8th grade and captain in his senior year. Keara is an active member of Manorville Fury. In addition Keara has been a member of the Varsity Track & Field team for five years, named All League for three of those years.

In her essay, Keara wrote, "Soccer helped me build the personality that I have now. I get so much joy being on the soccer field. Soccer is my life. I am not good at school so I can't say that about school. I try my best but it just isn't good enough to get the grades I am looking for. With my learning disabilities, no matter how hard I try I can't seem to shine in school. But on the soccer field things are different, I can shine there. ...I volunteer every year for the youth summer soccer program at my school. I love teaching the kids to play soccer. I also help out when needed with my younger brothers soccer team. He doesn't like it, but I do."

Coach Michael Norris wrote, "I have had the pleasure of coaching Keara since she was 11 years old. She has been the heart and soul of my defense for all of those years and I have had the pleasure to watch her grow up and become the confident and outgoing young woman she is today. She controls the field like a professional. I have seen many people gravitate to Keara because of her infectious personality. The friendships she has created over the years with her friends and teammates are ones that I see lasting forever. Keara also keeps in shape in the off seasons by running track and makes sure I know when her meets are so that I can come."

Keara is one of two recipients of **The Frank & Michael Vertullo Foundation Scholarship** and will continue her education at Suffolk County Community College.

In Keara's words:

"I am very excited to be continuing my education and athletics at Suffolk Community College. I am looking forward to see what the future holds."



Victoria Thurer

Victoria is a 2017 graduate of Walt Whitman High School, where she played varsity soccer for three years. Victoria has been a member of the HBC Angels. Academically Victoria has a weighted GPA of 95. She has been a member of the National Honor Society, English Honor Society, World Language Honor Society and Girls Leaders Organization. Victoria has volunteered for TOPS Soccer Program, Challenger Softball Program, Safe Halloween and Special Olympics.

In her essay, Victoria wrote, “My sister and I always had a close relationship growing up and soccer was definitely a major part of our bond. However, it wasn’t just playing soccer together, it was me teaching her how to play soccer altogether. My sister Alana has Trisomy-21 also known as Down-Syndrome. Despite her disability, she is still able to pass and trap a soccer ball like any other soccer player. In fact, growing up through elementary, middle, and high school I have always helped out her TOP Soccer Program teaching Alana and children with other disabilities how to play soccer. This has shaped not only my soccer career and instincts on the field, but my life as a whole and character that I have become. This program, along with just simply shooting a soccer ball in the backyard with Alana, has built my patience, understanding, mindset, selflessness, and helpful abilities. By demonstrating to these children what to do has not only made me a better player with specific skills, but also made me recognize my teammates’ mistakes and help fix them...truly how allowing only positive vibes get to you whether it’s during a game or test really can result in the best outcome. I look back on my childhood soccer career and even though it was a bit unique...I wouldn’t have wanted it any other way, because without it I wouldn’t be the person I am today.”

Business Teacher, Sandy Stueber wrote, “Victoria is a true student athlete; she takes her focus and drive from the field and brings that into the classroom. Teamwork comes like second nature for Victoria which is a unique quality for a student to display in the classroom. One of the things I always notice about Victoria is that she is not looking for the spotlight, it just naturally finds her...As an educator, I always hope they leave my classroom with the knowledge and respect for themselves and their potential. I also hope they appreciate the importance of character, which is a critical component of every arena I teach. I believe that I am a better teacher, and more aware of my personal character because of Victoria. Victoria is confident in her abilities, not afraid of challenges that life brings her, caring of family and friends, and compassionate to others.”

Victoria is one of two recipients of **The Frank & Michael Vertullo Foundation Scholarship** and will continue her education at SUNY Oneonta.

In Victoria’s words:

“I will be attending SUNY Oneonta this fall and I plan on playing club soccer there. I am a well-rounded individual who dedicates my time to school, sports, and community service. I plan on studying biology at Oneonta with a concentration in Occupational Therapy.”

Modell's Scholarship

Modell's Sporting Goods has been a sponsor of the Long Island Junior Soccer League for more than 30 years. They are a major sponsor of the LIJSL sportsmanship program and supporting sponsors of the LIJSL Convention. Thousands of LIJSL players have proudly worn the sportsmanship patch on their uniforms over the years. Thanks to the generosity of Modell's, we are able to continue these programs that help to benefit our young athletes.



Sean Walsh

Sean is a 2017 graduate of Copiague High School, where he played varsity soccer for three years and a captain for two years. Sean has been an active member of the East Islip Rebels and LIJSL PDP program for five years. Sean has been recognized with the Captain Alex Fyfe Courage Award, All League, All Conference and the recipient of the Coaches Award. Sean has been a four year volunteer for Toys for Tots food and coat drive, Just for Kicks Soccer Program and the Brittney Walsh Memorial Fund. In addition, Sean has participated in Varsity Lacrosse grades 9-12, Varsity Bowling grades 10-12 and Varsity Football grades 11-12. Sean has played soccer since he was 5 and has played in England. In addition to the team sports, Sean likes boating and snowboarding.

Coach Louis Pepe of East Islip Soccer, wrote, "Sean is a natural leader, his outgoing personality has created an atmosphere that makes coaching him a pleasure...He helps warm-up the players, speaks to the Ref and is always ready to take on responsibility...Along with his outstanding character, Sean has developed into a fantastic soccer player. Sean's instincts and ability to be one step ahead of the opposition were truly amazing to watch. The other boys on the team quickly realized that Sean is a teammate in the truest sense of the word. Sean leads by example, and is fiercely competitive on the field, which breeds respect and admiration among his peers... It is very unusual to be able to have an intense desire to win and succeed on the field, and also have the ability to put the game behind you when the game is over..."

Coach Jim Konen wrote, "...Sean is a four sport Varsity Athlete here at Copiague. He is a three year Varsity award winner and team Captain for three teams...As an athlete Sean has great potential. He has persevered on the field to become a major asset for Copiague athletics. He has worked very hard and has become a true leader on the field and in his community...Sean is extremely responsible, organized and a valued member of our school...smart, energetic and a very talented young man who has an extremely bright future."

Sean is the recipient of the **Modell's Scholarship** and will continue his education at Kean University.

Sean's quote:

"What's life without a goal?"



Sean Urda Memorial Scholarship

On January 26, 2015 in his senior year at John Glenn High School, Sean Urda tragically lost his life in a sledding accident. He was one of those special people that lived every day as if it were his last. He knew that a smile made a difference and that laughter could warm your heart. He touched everyone he came in contact with in a special way. “Work hard, play hard” is a phrase that applied to the way Sean lived his life. He was always aiming higher and working to become better whether in school, on the field, or in life. Above all else Sean loved his family, friends and soccer and he was loved in return.

At one year old Sean got his first soccer ball and it has never left his side. By three years old, Sean was a soccer dynamo and the Elwood Soccer Club allowed him to begin playing early. By eight, he was playing on both his team and his older brother’s team, when they needed subs. Later, he went to play for Northport Soccer Club and his tournament team the Score FC. He was recognized as a leader on his teams and named captain. In high school, Sean was a three year varsity player and awarded All-League in his senior year. The #14, Sean’s jersey number, has become very important to his family and friends. His HS will retire his number once his younger brother graduates. The # 14 has become a symbol of Sean to many that cared about him.

Sean was an all-around athlete and enjoyed lacrosse, skiing, snowboarding, and his favorite gym sport – pickle ball, but his passion was always soccer. In addition to high school athletics, Sean was a member of Natural Helpers, National Honor Society, the marching and jazz band and a counselor at the Huntington Playground Camp.

His dream was to play at a collegiate level and he hoped that his academic achievements and goals would align with a school that he would attend and competitively play soccer for. Sean was accepted to all 14 schools he had applied to but unfortunately, he never got the chance to choose.

What we would like you to know of Sean is that for him people always came first – family, friends, teammates, classmates, everyone. He went out of his way to listen, to make someone smile, and to help anyone when they were down. He was 100% genuine and a true friend to all.



Daniel Sparkowski

Daniel is a 2017 graduate of East Meadow High School, where he was a three-year starting member of the Varsity Soccer team and captain in his junior and senior year. Daniel is an active member of the Levittown Rage. Daniel has garnered All Conference, All County Awards, All-Star Team Selection, Player of the Week and Scholar Athlete. Daniel has been a member of the Eastern NYS Olympic Development Program since 2015. Academically, Daniel is also strong with a 103 weighted

GPA, a member of the National Honor Society, History Honor Society and the Italian Honor Society. He is involved as a member of Brass Ensemble, Band-Euphonium, Key Club and Sports Ambassadors. Daniel is a volunteer as a youth advocate in Nassau County Youth Court and has volunteered at Carmen Avenue Veterinary Hospital.

In his essay Daniel wrote, “The sport of soccer has taught me many valuable lessons, one of them that there is always someone better than you...It was a winter showcase in my Junior year when I was approached by...the head coach from Morrisville State College, a Division 3 school...I was not expecting him to come to one of my games since the tournament was so large...The coach would come to a few more of my games and after a trip to the campus, my heart was set. I could not picture myself at any other school...I am grateful for the sport of soccer that got me where I am today and to help me start the next chapter of my life.”

Lawrence Blauvelt, DVM wrote, “Daniel is reliable and hardworking, and I’ve enjoyed watching him grow into a confident young man. I continue to be impressed by Daniel’s ability to balance academics, sports and community service and the way he is able to excel in all of them. He has inherent leadership qualities, and I can see already the kind of man he will become. ”

Daniel is the recipient of the **Sean Urda Memorial Scholarship** and will continue his education at Morrisville State College and will be playing for the Mustangs.

In Daniel’s words:

“I am very grateful that I have been chosen to receive one of the LIJSL scholarships. I will be attending Morrisville State College in the fall and I will be playing soccer for the Mustangs. I am looking forward to studying at Morrisville for my degree in Criminal Justice and going on to a career in law enforcement.”



Dalia Morelli Memorial Scholarship

Dalia Morelli was a resident of Bellmore, New York. She was the loving wife of Rocco Morelli for 29 years and the mother of four outstanding children, Maria, Dahlia, Rocco, and Ettore. She shared a true unconditional love for her husband and children. Dalia graciously extended this love, care and concern, without effort, to her extended family and friends as well. She was simply an amazing woman. There was nothing that Dalia would not do, in a positive effort, for those that were dear to her. She loved her children equally and unconditionally. She embraced everything that made them whole. They are all so completely different yet the presence of Dalia is evident within each of them. She proudly praised all of their successes, admired their individuality, and always encouraged them to believe there was no feat they could not accomplish regardless of set backs that may occur throughout life. Dalia made sure that God was a strong presence in their lives at all times. Her children are clearly a true testament of who Dalia Morelli was.

Dalia was a hero to all who knew her, and was loved by everyone. Those that knew her felt blessed to have been able to call her a friend. Always giving and never seeking anything in return. She managed a thriving business, while performing all her other family responsibilities. Dalia knew how to lift your spirits when you were feeling down. She had such dignity unlike anyone you knew. She had the grace of a queen and the presence of an angel. With all that, she was suffering, because the cancer was taking over her body. She would greet anyone who entered a room with such a warmth and kindness, that you would forget she was ill. The first question she'd ask would be, "How is your family?" or "How are you feeling?" Dalia was simply amazing. Her courage kept those around her strong. She was a positive force in all the lives she touched.

Dalia Morelli is missed everyday but will never be forgotten.



Amanda Spitaleri

Amanda is a 2017 graduate of Connetquot High School, where she was a four-year varsity soccer starter leading scorer for all 4 years, and captain in her senior year. Amanda has been a member of the Lake Grove-Newfield Tsunami. Academically Amanda has an unweighted GPA of 94. She has received awards that include All-League, All-Conference and All-County. She is a Wall of Fame Inductee for Connetquot High School. Amanda has been a volunteer at Sunrise Nursing Home and has trained young soccer players.

In her essay, Amanda wrote, "Soccer gave me the privilege to get outside my comfort zone and allow me to be a more outgoing, charismatic individual. It made my shy-self no longer want to hide away behind my peers. I wanted to stand out and show my capabilities...For the first time in my life, my natural shyness and fear of being in big groups vanished and was overpowered by my passion for soccer."

Coach Frank Stagnitta wrote, "She has an incredible goals scored: minutes played up top ratio. However, over the years we have asked her, despite being our best goal scorer and attacking talent and a player who wants to and thrives being up top, to play any and all positions, particularly center-back over the last year or so. Most players somewhere along the line would get frustrated not playing where they enjoy and find the most success—but not Amanda—not even after a bad loss, or a frustrating game where she didn't feel she played well since she hadn't trained much as a defender much of her life. She does whatever she is asked, whenever asked, with a smile on her face."

Amanda is the recipient of the **Dalia Morelli Memorial Scholarship** and will continue her education and soccer career at Bryant University.

In Amanda's words:

"Thank you for selecting me to be one of your scholarship award recipients. I will be attending Bryant University in the fall. I will be playing division 1 soccer there. I am a hardworking, determined individual who demonstrates leadership qualities. I want to be a Financial Planner in the future."

Rocco Amorosa *Sportsmanship Award* *Scholarship*



“Mr. Sportsmanship”

Rocco was a **US Soccer Life Member** and a member of the **Hall Of Fame** for **LIJSL** and **Eastern New York**. Rocco cared about the sport and the effect it could have on players, parents, coaches and referees. He left his mark on all of us with his kindness and love of the game of soccer in more ways than many know. He should be remembered as the founder of the **LIJSL Sportsmanship Program** “Building Character through Soccer” in 1980, the first program of its kind in youth sports. He wanted to remind all of us about the lessons of civility, teamwork and fair play. He is not here today, but his spirit will live on. He was a blessing to all who knew him.



Brian Killian

Brian is a 2017 graduate of Chaminade High School, where he played on the competitive junior varsity team for two years. Brian is a member of the Wantagh/Seaford Militia. Academically Brian has an ACT composite Score of 29 and an unweighted GPA of 94. Brian is ranked 38 out of a class 437 young men and a member of the National Honor Society. He is a member of Science Olympiad, Science Club, Science Research Club, Spanish Club, Social Studies Club, General Student Organization, Catholic League and Intramurals. Brian is a member of the Bavarian Cultural Society of LI, a St. Frances de Chantel Vacation Bible School Volunteer and a Volunteer Goalkeeping coach for Wantagh/Seaford PAL Goalkeeper Clinic.

In his essay, Brian wrote, "...To me soccer is more than just a game, it is something that influences me every day and something that has been influencing me for the past fourteen years...soccer has taught me how to live, and it has made myself aware of all of the characteristics that life encompasses. One of those aspects of life is character. ..Discipline, loyalty and accountability are qualities of a good character that have instilled in me through the sport of soccer...my grandfather, Edmund Killian,...one of the eleven Honorary Presidents of NY HOTA Bavarian SC...As the son of a German immigrant, my grandfather taught me discipline both on and off the field...I was taught to respect all players, coaches, and especially the referee and I was also instructed to always tuck in my shirt... they have played a lasting role that lives on in both my discipline on the soccer pitch as well as in my grandfather's memory...Soccer has not just played a small part in my young life, it has been one of the largest influences, and this sport has shaped me into the man I am today..."

Coach Kevin Mehryari wrote, "Brian has a certain individual and team-oriented quality which has proven in many of our showcases playing against other clubs. He is a player with a unique set of skills and awareness, a quick thinker. He is also a very responsible dedicated and trustworthy player with a lot of heart ."

Brian is the recipient of The **Rocco Amoroso Sportsmanship Award Scholarship** and will continue his education at Binghamton University.

In Brian's words:

"I am a soccer enthusiast, recently graduated from Chaminade High School. I will be attending Binghamton University to study biochemistry, with the intent of pursuing a career in medicine, more specifically emergency medicine."



Frank Gorman Memorial Scholarship

According to Newsday's article, "Everybody Loved Him" Frank was a Brentwood resident for 26 years who had recently moved to Farmingville. He was hit by a car and died on January 5, 2003. Those who knew Frank said he didn't merely strive for perfection, he achieved it! The former Brentwood High School track and soccer star ran more than a thousand miles a year to keep in peak condition.

The 26-year-old soccer coach and youth leader was an All-America in the 3200-meter run after he earned third place in a 1994 national competition while attending Brentwood High School. Frank began his soccer career when he was 3 ½ years old in Brentwood where he also served as a referee, assistant soccer coach and trainer of youth teams. He later played for Hofstra University where he was known as "Stormin Gorman." He graduated from college in 2000 with a bachelor's degree in psychology. After graduation, Frank divided his time between a job at his mom's All-State Insurance office in Bay Shore, coaching junior Varsity at his high school Alma Mater and playing soccer. Frank also worked with Adelante, where he enjoyed being able to talk to the kids one on one about their future plans. A tribute to Frank given by Hofstra University soccer coach Richard Nutall, which he said, "Frank had a fantastic ability to bring people together. He was more instrumental than anyone in bringing the men's soccer squad together as one. He was a major catalyst for team harmony, the "foreigners" and the "Americans" were made to mix by his constant Gorman social diplomacy.

"We always thought of him as "Little Frank" to distinguish the difference between his Dad, "Big Frank" but "little Frank" wasn't small, but just how grand was he?" The answer to the question of how grand was "little Frank" is easy, Frank was MASSIVE-MASSIVE in our heart and massive in our minds forever.



Rose Savocchi

Rose is a 2017 graduate of Northport High School, where she played junior varsity and varsity soccer and was actively involved in the Northport HS community. Rose has been a member of the Northport Cow Harbor Voltage. Academically Rose has an SAT score of 1300 with a weighted GPA of 100. Rose is a member of the National Honors Society, Language Honor Society and has participated in Spanish Club and Buddy Club. Rose has volunteered for Special Olympics and is a Special Olympics Certified coach and has volunteered as a Peer Tutor for elementary and middle school aged students for four years. Rose has received the Northport High School Outstanding Character Award and the Student Achievement Award for Hispanic Heritage.

In her essay, Rose wrote, "Soccer has also given me strength as an individual. Two years ago when my father became ill with cancer, soccer became the perfect outlet for me. Every practice and game helped temporarily distract me from the serious things going on in my life and gave me something positive to focus on...Soccer has not only given me something to be passionate about, but has given me some of my most valuable characteristics."

School Counselor Mary Ann Powers wrote, "Rose emerged as a leader, setting her own expectations...She has chosen friends who make good social decisions. She plays basketball and soccer on school and community teams, and has been named captain on several of them. Rose is a coach's dream, as she is the ultimate team player-with qualities of unselfishness, a positive attitude and commitment. Rose never gives up, no matter what obstacle is put in her path, and she excels in all she does...Rose takes stressful situations in stride, and is an extremely balanced individual."

Rose is the recipient of the **Frank Gorman Memorial Scholarship** and will continue her education at Wake Forest University.

In Rose's words:

"I am an active and motivated person, who is more than excited to pursue a major in International business at Wake Forest next year."



Joseph Lombardo Memorial Scholarship

Joe Lombardo was born and raised in Astoria, Queens, where he met his wife, Mary. They were blessed with two children, Joey and Michelle. The Lombardo Family decided to move and raise their family on Long Island. Not long after moving to South Huntington, Joe began coaching soccer. He started off coaching Joey's team and then Michelle's team to many first place wins and NY State championships. Joe loved the sport. In addition to coaching, Joe helped start the HBC TOPS Soccer Program and Special Olympic Soccer League, organized and managed the HBC Peter Renzulli Labor Day Tournament and was a champion of sportsmanship.

Joe became President of HBC Soccer Club and in 1989 was inducted into the LIJSL Hall of Fame. You could always find Joe on a soccer field, whether it was watching a game, lining fields or handing out trophies.

Joe was a man who touched the lives of so many people. He was a kind, generous and loving husband, father and grandfather. Joe was a man of integrity, who always saw the good in everyone.

Joe Lombardo passed away on June 26, 2014 from complications from pneumonia.



Jordan Anderson

Jordan is a 2017 graduate of Commack High School, where he played two years on the junior varsity team and was a two year member of the varsity soccer team, captain in his senior year. He is a recipient of All-Conference honors. Jordan is a member of HBC United. Jordan is a member of the National Honor Society, National Spanish Honor Society, a member of the Boys Scholar Athlete Club. He has volunteered for the Special Olympics, Commack Cougar Soccer Camp and Relay for Life. Jordan is a Long Island Soccer Referee.

In his essay, Jordan wrote, "I'm always traveling with my HBC United club team and competing on a high level against some of the best teams and athletes in the country. I give it my all and won't let anything stop me from achieving high grades in school as well as excellence on the field...Soccer has influenced my decision to pursue a specific major in college. I intend to pursue Exercise Science/Kinesiology for my undergraduate degree which will lead me to my graduate program for a Doctorate of Physical Therapy to become a physical therapist...I want to be a person who helps athletes and others rehabilitate and get back onto the field or their everyday lives as soon as possible....Long Island Junior Soccer League, thank you for affording me and many other individuals the opportunity to play this beautiful game of soccer and develop into fine young men and women."

Coach David Moran wrote, "Jordan's overall character on the field is inspiring. His relentless pursuit of opponents and his desire to control the game through ball possession and distribution, is what separates him from the average player. He plays quick and hard and rarely loses a ball, be it on the ground, or in the air."

Jordan is the recipient of the **Joseph Lombardo Memorial Scholarship** and will continue his education at Ohio State University, pursuing a degree in Exercise Science.

Favorite Quote:

"Success is no accident. It is hard work, perseverance, learning, studying, sacrifice and most of all, love of what you are doing or learning to do." - Pelé



Peter C. Collins

Presidential Scholarship

Peter became LIJSL President in 1977 and stepped down from that position on January 1, 2004. Under Peter's inclusive leadership, the LIJSL more than quadrupled in size and now sports 1,500 teams. These significant achievements have occurred during Peter's leadership of our league; In 1978, the LIJSL became the first formal soccer league to begin a Special Children's Program. In that same Peter became LIJSL President in 1977 and stepped down from that position on January 1, 2004.

Under Peter's inclusive leadership, the LIJSL more than quadrupled in size and now sports 1,500 teams. These significant achievements have occurred during Peter's leadership of our league; In 1978, the LIJSL became the first formal soccer league to begin a Special Children's Program. In that same year there was the creation of a springtime annual cup competition for all LIJSL teams. Originally named the Long Island Cup, it morphed into the Chase Cup in 1982 and became the Waldbaum's Challenge in 1996.

The esteemed LIJSL Sportsmanship Program began in 1980, now copied around the world; Peter was influential in starting the high school all-star competition, known as the Exceptional Senior Games, which also has been copied across the United States by other soccer leagues. In 1983, the LIJSL Convention was created and it quickly became and still is America's largest soccer convention.

Creation of the Long Island Soccer Park in Plainview, which has been used by the LIJSL's Special Children since 1985 and our other teams on a rotational basis during the past decade is another testament to Peter's tenacity. The LI Soccer Park was renamed the Peter C. Collins Soccer Park.

Peter coached the Hicksville Minutemen to the McGuire Cup finals in both 1979 and 1980. Peter has been inducted into the LIJSL, Eastern New York and National Soccer Halls of Fame and is a lifetime member of the United States Soccer Federation.



Maria Aruanna

Maria is a 2017 graduate of Bellport High School, where she played varsity soccer for three years, and was captain her senior year. Maria is a member of the Terryville Outbreak. Academically Maria has an SAT Score of 1420 and a weighted GPA of 102 and the Bellport High School Class Valedictorian and a member of the National Honor Society.

She has been recognized as a Scholar-Athlete each of her four years of high school, All County Scholar Award in her senior year, a member of Math Honor Society, Science Honor Society and Math Team. Many of her volunteer activities center on her high school community and include being a math tutor, Trick or Treat Street, Vice-President for Haunting for a Cause and Easter Egg Hunt.

In her essay, Maria wrote, "...You play the way you practice." I've been told this a million times by every soccer coach I've ever had. It has allowed me to become a better soccer player, but also a better and more intelligent student...Even when I was younger, I always knew that I had to surpass the girl standing a few feet away from me in the jersey colored differently than mine. I mentally prepared myself to be two steps ahead than my defender at all times, both with strategy and physically covering the field...Being completely deaf in my right ear, I'm unable to accurately hear the volume at which I speak, so I was naturally louder than all of my teammates allowing me to come off as a leader... While the aforementioned quote relates precisely to sports, I affiliated it with my education as well...I silently kept myself ahead of the game and strived to do better than the rest of my competition in the top 10 percent. Due to the fact that I am Valedictorian of my class, I can assure anyone that results directly relate to the means...Soccer became an outlet from these studies, but also contributed to a huge amount of my success in my educational career. The sport pushed me to strive and do what it takes to win, no matter what game is taking place in my life at any given moment."

Coach Tony Esposito wrote, "...when I could not be present, Maria could be trusted to run the workout as planned... Maria is a goal-oriented achiever...when Maria wanted to excel in soccer, she put forth extra effort in optional evening training...Maria responds to the call of leadership. Maria's thoughtful remarks and comments are well received by her team. It is true that Maria distinguished herself by her personal hard work, but has also earned much respect for her demonstrated ability to foster growth in her younger teammates. At the high school level, it takes courage to lead, and Maria possessed such courage."

Maria is the recipient of the **Peter C. Collins Presidential Scholarship** and will continue her education at St. Joseph's College.

In Maria's words:

"I will be pursuing my masters in accounting with hopes of becoming a CPA. I strive to work for one of the Big Four and then opening a firm of my own."



John R. Pinezich Memorial Scholarship

John Pinezich was born in Astoria, Queens in 1933 to immigrants from what is now Croatia. He was a graduate of Brooklyn Technical High School in 1951 and was awarded a scholarship to Pennsylvania State University where he played on the varsity soccer team for 4 years. As a freshman, he was part of the first U.S. diplomatic mission to Iran as the youngest member of the Penn State Soccer team. They played a series of goodwill games with Iranian teams throughout the country. In 1954, he captained the NCAA championship team for Penn State and received First Team All-American honors. He was a member of the U.S. National Team in 1955, and had one cap in a game against Iceland. He also traveled the world as a member of the U.S. Armed Forces soccer team.

Throughout his youth, beginning in the early 1940s, he played soccer for Eintracht Soccer Club in the former German-American League. His team won the Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup in 1955, the highest achievement in soccer at the time. He scored two goals in the last six minutes for a 2-0 win in the championship game against the Los Angeles Danes (one with his left foot and one with his right, as he liked to point out.)

In 1958, he met the love of his life, Evelyn Reis, and they were married for almost fifty years. They moved to Northport, Long Island in 1962, and raised three children, John, Lyn and Karin, all of whom played soccer. His love for the game lead him, in 1971, to help found the Northport Soccer Club. He spent the first 5 years as Club President and remained on the Board of Directors for many years. He was actively involved in coaching teams for Northport and the Long Island Junior Soccer League for almost 30 seasons, even after his children were no longer playing for the club. He coached the Long Island Region gold medal winning Scholastic Girls teams for the Empire State Games in 1983 and 1984, and the Open Women's team to a gold medal in 1982. He was also a USSF Region 1 girls select staff coach in 1983 and coached the LIJSL Boys select in 1975-76.

He passed away in 2008 at his winter home in Stuart, Florida of a stroke. He lived a very full life pursuing his endless interests: soccer, landscaping and bonsai, history, sailing, airplanes, architecture, design, travel, his Croatian community and his wonderful extended family. Throughout his life, he touched us all with his strength, modesty, dignity, curiosity, and passion. His openness of emotion, love and generosity embraced us all. We are honored to establish this memorial fund in his memory.



Kristen Shine

Kristen is a 2017 graduate of Eastport South Manor Jr-Sr High School, where she played varsity soccer for four years and captained her team. Kristen has been a member of the Manorville Fury. Kristen participated in the Executive Cup College Soccer Showcase and the 2016 Exceptional Seniors Game. Kristen is a volunteer counselor at ESM for soccer and track.

Science Teacher, Glenn Mayola wrote, "It is with heavy heart that I write this recommendation, but as they say, "one man's loss, is another's gain". Kristen has excelled in high school sports, leadership and service. She is captain of both the Varsity Soccer and Varsity Track teams, part of the Varsity Leaders club, and was part of the team that was crowned Executive Cup champions...As her teacher, I have not only an outstanding student, but I have gotten to know Kristen personally. She uses good judgement in everything she does, whether it is deciding to finish an assignment ahead of time or her choice in friends. In a word, she has "soul", and by that I mean a light that shines from her. She has grace, a rare quality...When she leaves to continue her education, I will truly miss her."

Coach Michael Norris wrote, "Season after season, she is one of the team's top scorers and assist leaders; her speed and agility has been a constant asset to a team that continues to succeed at a high level within the league...Kristen is one of a triplet and while some might struggle to find their identity in that situation, I have had the opportunity to see her grow into an individual from the girl she was into the young woman she has become...Kristen runs track and competes in the off season...For the last couple of years we've had opportunities to talk about what she wants next for her life and she never waivers from continuing to play the sport she loves. She truly loves the game of soccer. She has been accepted to attend and play soccer at SUNY Farmingdale and I look forward to going to watch her play at the collegiate level. "

Kristen is the recipient of the **John R. Pinezich Memorial Scholarship** and will continue her education and soccer career at Farmingdale State College.

In Kristen's words:

"I am very active, enthusiastic, determined, and hard working. For my future, I would like to somehow be involved in the world of sports whether it be as a sports broadcaster or in the background getting the team on the field."



Michael Secko Memorial Scholarship

Some people make a difference by being who they are. That was Mike Secko. He touched many lives in all areas of his life, family, work, soccer, and community. The ultimate volunteer, he shared his wisdom and set a good example to those under his care, and he put great emphasis in work done well, especially pertaining to the sport he loved most, soccer. Never did he guess that his involvement would take him places both domestic and abroad. A positive person, he looked for the good in everyone he met and every challenging situation that arose along the way. Starting his career in the Father Joe Basel Sports Program through St. Mark's Roman Catholic Church, Mike volunteered as a Munchkin League soccer coach for his eldest son, Michael III. Soon after, Mike became the program's director and he remained in this position for twenty years. As time went on and his children grew, Mike's career moved forward as well. Looking for a solid soccer program in which to enroll his children, Mike discovered the Sound Beach Soccer Club. As a committed father and fan of the sport, Mike took on the role of head coach for two teams, the Sound Beach Wildcats, Michael's team, and the Sound Beach Breakers, Matthew's team. For many people, this would be enough. Not for Mike. As Mike's children grew, so did his love for the game. It comes as no surprise that Mike would eventually become the club vice president, and then president. In addition, Mike's affiliation with LIJSL led him to serve on various committees: Games, Convention, and Waldbaum's coordinator. He also helped with presentations for the College Bound Player Committee and was on the Exceptional HS Senior Soccer Game committee. On a state level, Mike coordinated for the State Cup Tournament and was team administrator for the State Olympic Development Program.

Over the course of his life, many admired Mike's overwhelming accomplishments, including a number of Waldlbaum's Cup wins, out-of-state titles, several sportsmanship awards, taking the Sound Beach Wildcat team from 9th Division in 1987 to 1st Division in 1992, and a personal highlight, winning the State Challenge Cup in 1994 with the Sound Beach Breakers. Aside from the medals and trophies, however, Mike's most cherished accomplishment was being an assistant coach and administrator for Terryville Fire in which his youngest son, Mark, was a member. In 2007, the Terryville Fire won the State, Region I, and National Championships. It was a proud journey to have shared with his son. Beyond soccer, Mike was a kind, loving, and generous man. His love of family knew no bounds. For Mike, soccer was about spending time with family, and all three of his sons will forever remember their biggest fan, the man who supported their entire journey. Sadly, in December 2012 Mike lost his battle to cancer, almost one year to the day he discovered his diagnosis. The void left behind can never be filled by the ones who loved him most. For them, it was Mike who made this world a little bit better, a little bit brighter. In his memory and in celebration of his life, we hope that his memory continues. Much like Mike who made a significant difference in all those around him, we hope this scholarship will make a difference, too.



Blake Aronson

Blake is a 2017 graduate of Walt Whitman High School, where he played varsity soccer for five years, and was captain in his senior year. Blake has been a member of the Dix Hills Hurricanes and has played ENY State ODP and Region 1 Team from 2012-2016. Academically Blake has a weighted GPA of 91. Blake is a member of the National Honor Society, Interact Club and Peanut Butter & Jelly Club. Blake has volunteered at Wildcat Sports Camp, Clothing Drive and Special Olympics. Blake has received multiple soccer awards, including All League, All-State and All-Region.

In his essay, Blake wrote, "I couldn't feel the cold November air anymore as I was thrown into a massive dog pile with my team. The way I felt on the soccer after winning the state Championship game was indescribable. The crowd chanted our names and photographers took pictures of us as if we were celebrities...Before taking home the amazing victory, I was very shy and kept to myself most of the time...after winning the state championship, I came out of my shell. I wanted to get to know the people that knew all about me and always supported me. Whitman is filled with so many incredible people and I wish I was able to figure that out before my junior year."

Coach John DiGiacomo wrote, "As an athlete, there are no other individuals who work harder than Blake. Blake is a 3 year starter and was instrumental to our team's success, playing a multitude of positions on the field each year. He possesses all of the necessary tools both tactically and technically to achieve success at the next level of play. Blake is a 3 x All Star, earning All-League Honors as a sophomore, NSCAA All State Honors as a junior and NSCAA All State/All Region honors as a senior. He was part of a program that went to a Suffolk County Semi-final, Suffolk County Final and a team that captured the NY State Class AA Championship, finishing with a National Ranking of #11... Blake would be described as intelligent, determined, tenacious and confident...Even as our Captain he has constantly looked to improve his play and has ALWAYS placed the team ahead of himself."

Blake is the recipient of the **Michael Secko Memorial Scholarship** and will continue his education and athletic career at Marist College.

In Blake's words:

"In the Fall I will be attending Marist College. My plans for the future are to graduate college and keep soccer in my life either as a coach or player."

Jonathan Marc Serota Memorial Scholarship

Jonathan Marc Serota was a 9 year old Rockville Center Soccer Club travel team member who passed away on January 9, 1983 after a sudden and brief yet virulent illness. Even at that young age, he displayed a special gift and passion for soccer that lit up the sport for teammates and opponents alike. He was the leading goal scorer in the travel division and captain of his championship team. Nevertheless his own greatest pride was in making assists and his greatest joy came from his team's and his teammates' successes.

Jonathan Serota is remembered not just as being what many considered the dominant player in the L.I. Junior Soccer League in his division; but as a nice boy, a truly kind human being, who enjoyed the real and mutual friendship of his teammates on and off the field - such that every year on January 9th, since his passing, his teammates and their parents continue to make an effort to get together in his memory.

Jonathan Serota is remembered by the Rockville Centre Soccer Club who have for the past 29 years sponsored The Jonathan Serota Memorial Soccer Festival on the Saturday of each Memorial Day weekend in his memory. And, believe it or not, in keeping with the special light brought to everyone around him, the sun has always been shining while the many games of The Jonathan Serota Memorial Soccer Festival are being played. In 29 years, there has not been one rain out.

Jonathan Serota, who was also known for academic excellence and love of learning, is remembered by the Rockville Centre Public Schools with a playground named after him at the elementary school he attended. As a result of the special outpouring that occurred from the community after his passing, The Jonathan Serota Memorial Foundation was founded. It continues to provide college scholarships each year for the high school graduating senior boy and girl soccer players who are the kind of scholar athletics helping others that Jonathan hoped to be.



Daniel Urli

Daniel is a 2017 Valedictorian and graduate of Massapequa High School and a member of the Varsity Soccer Team. Dan is an active member and captain of the Massapequa Sharks. Academically, Dan's rank as # 1 speaks volumes. Dan has been acknowledged as an AP Scholar with Distinction, National Honor Society Vice-President and team captain of Physics Olympics. He volunteers as a peer tutor. He has a composite ACT score of 35 and a 99.574 unweighted GPA. Dan has served as the Treasurer of Students Against Destructive Decisions 2013-2017, a coach for Massapequa Special Needs Soccer and an Eagle Scout. For Dan's Eagle Scout project, he planned, collected and delivered soccer equipment to children in need.

In his essay Dan wrote, "The summer before 11th grade, I found out that I had two herniated disks in my lower back. Because of this, I could not exercise for the next few months and got out of shape. As a result, I did not make the varsity soccer team in 11th grade. I did not let this discourage me... I trained nearly every day from when I was cut to when the next tryouts were. I practiced, ran and lifted. When tryouts came around ...I had lost weight, gotten faster and become better at soccer....my work paid off and I made the team. The varsity coach, Coach Burke, informed me when I made the team that I probably wouldn't see the field. I took this as a challenge and continued to push myself harder, working my hardest at practice every day. I ended up getting a lot more playing time than I expected and finished off the season with 2 goals and 2 assists, in addition receiving Nassau County Scholar Athlete Award...Soccer taught me to strive to be the best version of myself...it has built me into a person I am more than happy to be."

School Counselor, Allison Fifield wrote, "Dan will be the first to tell you that he is most grateful for the challenges that didn't go quite as smoothly as say, those of his math and science courses. Even bigger than the triumph of being named, Valedictorian, for Dan, it was making the Varsity Soccer team this year. As the largest high school in the county, our athletic program is, well, merciless and in junior year, Dan was cut. Devastated but determined, Dan worked out, trained and earned back his spot senior year! So when he scored a goal...and the team made it to the playoffs, this clean cut boy was all too thrilled to bleach his hair with his teammates in solidarity as they contended for county championship!"

Dan is the recipient of the **Jonathan Marc Serota Memorial Scholarship** and will continue his education at Georgia Institute of Technology. Dan has orientation at Georgia Tech on the same date as the LIJSL Scholarship Awards Breakfast and is unable to attend today.

In Daniel's words:

"I have played soccer since I was three, and I am also a Boy Scout, so I've been lucky to have my life revolve around both soccer and helping people. In the future, I plan to continue helping others by becoming an engineer and shaping the future."

Miles for Matt Foundation Scholarship



The Miles for Matt Foundation was founded after Matt Scarpati, 19, who was cycling on the Wantagh State Bike Path, was struck and killed by a drunk, drugged and speeding motorcyclist, who left the Wantagh State Parkway at speeds estimated to be 100 miles per hour. Matt was killed that day, but our hope was that we would make recreation in the area safer. Through community efforts and those of elected officials, we were successful in having guardrails installed.

In addition, the bronze sculpture of a cyclist was placed in the park. This sculpture inspires conversations about many things, such as safety, cycling and life. Through donations and fundraising events, Miles for Matt Foundation supports scholarships, athletics, MADD and medical research.

The Journey continues.....



John “Jack” Bingham

Jack is a 2017 graduate of Regis High School, where he played soccer for four years, captain in his senior year and a member of the Garden City Centennial Hurricanes. Academically Jack has an SAT score of 1540, an ACT Composite Score of 34 and an equally impressive GPA. Jack is a National Merit Scholarship Corporation Finalist, has received the Adelphi University Prize for Leadership, has been a Eucharistic Minister at New York Hospital for Special Surgery, volunteered with GCCSC TOP-Soccer for the past 4 years. In addition, Jack has been a member of the Speech and Debate Club, contributor to the Regis High School Newspaper and was on the Volleyball Team for 4 years, Captain in his senior year.

In his essay Jack wrote, “As a soccer player at Regis High School, the goal year in and year out is to get a win against Fordham Prep...As the captain center back, I made my way back onto the field with my team counting on me, and the opponents plotting on how to expose me...the latter had their way. Despite playing the ball with my thigh, the referee blew for a hand ball in the box...The referee ignored my pleas and allowed Fordham to tie up the score...After the game I approached the referee...‘Listen kid, not every ball will roll your way and not every call will be in your favor. If someone knocks you down, you just can’t cry about it. You’ve gotta get back up and let your actions speak for your words.’ I knew he was right ...that referee, who taught me to only worry about what I could affect.”

Coach Vincent Catapano wrote, “In his role as captain, Jack demonstrated exemplary leadership skills, leading a relatively inexperienced Varsity squad including three starting sophomores to the New York City Catholic High School “AA” Intersectional Final against an undefeated competitor. In Jack’s two years on the Varsity squad, the team improved from a four-win team the year before he joined to a seven-win team his junior year and a 11-win team and ranked #4 in New York City by the time he reached his senior year...Jack has a way of bringing people together and ensuring that they work together for a common cause. He demonstrates commitment and teamwork and shows the team what is the ‘right thing to do’. As a coach I know I could not do what I do without kids like Jack on the team.”

Jack is the recipient of one of three **Miles for Matt Foundation Scholarships** and will continue his education at the University of Notre Dame.

In Jack’s words:

“Next year I will be attending the University of Notre Dame. I hope to play for the club team at Notre Dame but will at least play intramural soccer. I am planning on pursuing engineering at ND, and am really excited for the next four years.”



Dylan Hupert

Dylan is a 2017 graduate of Wantagh High School, where he played soccer for three years. Dylan has been a member of the Bellmore Blast. Academically Dylan has an SAT Score of 1280 and a 97 weighted GPA. Dylan is a member of the National Honor Society and the National Business Honor Society. He is a member of the Marching Band, Wind Ensemble, Band and Band Council, Pep Band, Theater, Peer Leadership Club, S.H.I.N.E., H.E.R.O. (Helping Everyone Respect Others), elected to Vice President and ITS Troupe 1623, serving as Treasurer.

In his essay, Dylan wrote, "I have always kept involved with Wantagh/Seaford PAL soccer even when I moved on to other clubs. I refereed intramural games...and I helped train a second grade team...I always wanted to coach a team, but given my own crazy schedule there was no way I could fit it in.... finally my father said to me, 'remember the clinic we used to do back in the intramural days'...Three year ago I started the W/S PAL Goalkeeper Clinic which is a free clinic available to anybody in the community who plays soccer and wants to learn the goalkeeper position. I recruited fellow keepers from the girls and boys JV and Varsity teams to volunteer, and for the last three seasons we've had an average of 20-25 players take part. The feeling of accomplishment giving back in this way is so satisfying I don't think I will ever stop. I have soccer and my dad, to thank for that."

Coach Ken Baker wrote, "...I remember the first couple of games Dylan started for us...our third game that fall season was against our rival from Hicksville and this was the team Dylan played for before he joined us. It was an extremely physical game from the start, and this was the first chance that we all got to see Dylan perform under duress. Simply stated he had an amazing game..., but it wasn't until the 2nd half after we went up 1-0 that things got a little "chippie". The Hicksville team tried to intimidate Dylan by bumping into him after he made saves, and there was one play when he went up, got the ball, and came down that he was run into and almost knocked over by the other team. Our defense came swarming over to protect their goalkeeper and Dylan calmly stepped around the Hicksville player and delivered the ball up field. That was the moment that we all knew we had a keeper and Dylan knew he had a team that that would watch his back..."

George Hagan, Wantagh/Seaford PAL Soccer Director wrote, "...before the intramural season started this past September 2016 we didn't have a single parent volunteering to coach one boy's kindergarten team and we were about to tell 10 boys that they couldn't play soccer last season. Before I canceled the team...I sent out a request to see if anyone would want to coach a kindergarten team. The first response was from Dylan..."

Dylan is one of three recipients of the **Miles for Matt Foundation Scholarship** and will continue his education at Arizona State University.

In Dylan's words:

"I will be attending Arizona State University (ASU) starting this August. I have been accepted into the W.P. Carey School for Business and I plan on majoring in Business Law."



Michael Maceluch 11

Michael is a 2017 graduate of Saint Anthony's High School, where he was a member of the freshman and junior varsity soccer team and the varsity soccer team in his senior year. Michael is the recipient of the 2016 Comeback Player of the Year for Saint Anthony's H.S. Boys Varsity Soccer. Michael is a member of the Northport Sabers. Academically Michael has an SAT score of 1350 and a weighted GPA of 98.55. Michael is a member of the National Honor Society, the Wall Street Club, Peanut Butter & Jelly Club, providing food for Long Island's hungry, Math Honor Society and a volunteer in the St. Hugh of Lincoln Parish Soup Kitchen.

In his essay, Michael wrote, "As I look back on my experiences playing soccer at all different levels of competition, I realize how important the meaning of family is. I started playing soccer at the age of five with my father in the backyard. I would come home from school, do my homework, and then go straight outside. We would have a pass and talk about how our days went...I wasn't great at soccer when I was young...but I enjoyed playing because it felt good to run around and spend time with my father...Through all of the stages of my life, whether it be my early years with my dad, my early teenage years with my club team, or my years with my high school team, I have been able to share my love for soccer with people I consider family. Soccer has taught me the important values of determination, hard work, trust, but most importantly, family."

Coach Don Corrao wrote, "Michael is a great Saint Anthony's story in fact, it goes beyond Saint Anthony's and his story should be one for others to emulate. You see, he played freshman and sophomore year, was cut junior year and came back senior year and not only earned a Varsity roster spot but contributed significantly to this year's team. One can describe Michael in four words: Character, Work Ethic, Caring...I want to assure the esteemed members of this committee that you could not possibly have a finer candidate who is more worthy of your serious consideration than this young man."

Michael is one of three recipients of the **Miles for Matt Foundation Scholarship** and will continue his education at Binghamton University. Michael is in Maine for the annual family vacation and unable to be here today.

In Michael's words:

"Along with soccer, I'm a hockey fan and my favorite team is the New York Rangers. I plan on majoring in finance and getting a minor in economics, and my goal is to work in New York City with a large investment bank. "

Michael's Fun Fact:

"I have yet to receive a yellow or red card while playing in LIJSL."

George Hoffman Top Soccer Special Children's Memorial Scholarship

George Hoffman, a Long Island Junior Soccer League Hall of Fame member, served on the Long Island Junior Soccer League Board of Directors for decades before his untimely passing in 1997. George was much of the creative force behind the Long Island Junior Soccer League newspaper "Kick Off" and his Bits'n Pieces column could be controversial but it always made you think. George was active supporter of the TopSoccer Program and LIJSL sponsors two scholarships to youth volunteer coaches in his memory.



Suzanne Espey

Suzanne Espey became involved with West Hempstead TopSoccer Program from the beginning in 2010. Her coach states that she became a leader among her peers, looking up to her for direction. Her easy nature and energy with the players set the example for the younger volunteers. She has reached out to her classmates and teammates to volunteer at TopSoccer. When she noticed that players did not always bring water to stay hydrated, she mobilized her Girl Scout troupe to supply a case of water for the players and volunteers each week. She has always been a goodwill representative for TopSoccer. As a Girl Scout, she has developed courage, confidence and character. All her volunteering has helped her become a more well-rounded student and future teacher.

Suzanne was School Ambassador at Holy Trinity High School, giving tours to future students. Also, Shadow Ambassador where students attend classes with you to get a feel for the school. As a member of Campus Ministry, she was involved with a Georgia Mission Trip, retreat, Volley for Life, Spring Fling and March for Life. She was a member of Light's, a religious leading group on campus, to help freshman and sophomores deepen their religious lifestyle. As a Girl Scout, she was involved with many activities including Habitat for Humanity, food and clothing drives and instructing Girl Scout caroling and crafts.

She played JV and Varsity Soccer on a champion team and belongs to the Art Honor Society and Honor Roll.

Suzanne says she was so excited to share her skills with the special athletes and see the progress they were making. It actually brings her joy. Being patient was a big lesson learned. Also, the difficult times taught her to persevere and do her best because the outcome will be worth it. Organizing her time improved by necessity due to the many commitments she had.

Suzanne has decided to attend SUNY Cortland for Education and Special Education. She believes that these kids need a push and guidance in other aspects of their lives and she would love to contribute to another kid's success and happiness, as well as their families. Her West Hempstead players will certainly miss her.

George Hoffman Top Soccer Special Children's Memorial Scholarship

George Hoffman, a Long Island Junior Soccer League Hall of Fame member, served on the Long Island Junior Soccer League Board of Directors for decades before his untimely passing in 1997. George was much of the creative force behind the Long Island Junior Soccer League newspaper "Kick Off" and his Bits'n Pieces column could be controversial but it always made you think. George was active supporter of the TopSoccer Program and LIJSL sponsors two scholarships to youth volunteer coaches in his memory.



Justin Tollin

Justin Tollin has been a volunteer with Commack TopSoccer for four years. The coach says that he has been consistently reliable, responsible and respectful. He is an amazing mentor to the athletes and the other volunteers. The kids love him as well as the coaches.

Besides TopSoccer, Justin has been involved with St. Baldrick's by shaving his head to raise money for kids with cancer, CTK CYO Basketball score keeper and clock manager for basketball games, and ran games for children to play at the Burr Halloween Party. He assisted his chemistry teacher within the class, helped freshman adapt to the high school environment, and worked school events including freshman orientation, senior matinee and Halloween Happening.

Justin is a member of the Math and Science Honor Societies, Spanish and National Honor Societies, Varsity Badminton, JV soccer, CTK Basketball, Commack Warrior Soccer and Long Island Sharks Baseball. He has worked as a referee, Little League umpire, Club concession stand and setting up and lining soccer fields.

Justin says working with the special children has fulfilled one of his dreams. He is proud to have helped them achieve their goal of playing soccer in an organized competitive environment. Justin feels it is very rewarding to be able to be part of such a wonderful program. His main goal is to try to better society by helping out in communities and create a similar program wherever he goes.

He will attend the University of South Carolina in the fall. His coach says he will definitely be missed by all next year.

Modell's Scholarship Top Soccer Special Children's Scholarship

Modell's Sporting Goods has been a sponsor of the Long Island Junior Soccer League for more than 30 years. They are the major sponsor of the LIJSL sportsmanship program, TopSoccer and supporting sponsors of the LIJSL Convention.

Thousands of LIJSL players have proudly worn the sportsmanship patch on their uniforms over the years. Thanks to the generosity of Modell's, we are able to continue these programs that help to benefit our young athletes and award a scholarship to a TopSoccer youth volunteer coach.



Shelbi Wuss

Shelbi Wuss is one of the most reliable and dedicated volunteers according to her coach. She has been working with South Huntington for over five years. She is great with all of the players. Each week she comes prepared to help in any capacity. The players really look up to her.

Shelbi involves herself in many other volunteer tasks besides TopSoccer. She volunteered at High Holiday Services at Temple Beth El of Huntington, Wildcats Sports Camp for soccer, field and track, Special Olympics track and field events, and Safe Halloween at Walt Whitman H.S. Shelbi helps the South Huntington Soccer Club with the development training program, soccer practice, as well as lining fields, etc. She also has been a tutor.

She has participated and won numerous awards playing Varsity Soccer, Exceptional Games, Varsity Track and Field and League Soccer. She is Valedictorian of Walt Whitman H.S. class of 2017. She is a Presidential Scholarship and Honors Program Scholarship winner at American University. Shelbi received a Dance Award given to one female and male graduate in each Suffolk County school who exemplifies outstanding physical performance, scholarship and citizenship. She is member of the National Honor Society, English and World Language Honor Societies, and News 12 Scholar Athlete. These are only a few of the awards she has earned. She also played JV and Varsity Soccer and Varsity Track and Field.

TopSoccer has taught Shelbi the importance of being yourself and the importance of understanding. She says that most of the athletes are so accepting of themselves and others and are willing to learn and help each other. She feels that the world can use a little bit of that mentality. Participating in TopSoccer taught her to stop and think about everything she has in life, especially things that she probably too often takes for granted and lets nothing stand in the way of what she has to accomplish. She says she will keep all of the experiences and memories from TopSoccer with her for the rest of her life.

Shelbi is leaving in the fall to attend American University, Washington, D.C. Her departure will be a great loss for South Huntington's Program.



Thank You

To all the families that graciously donated to the scholarship program in memory of their loved ones.

To our sponsors for their generosity year in and year out.

To the scholarship committee who dedicate their time to review each and every application from so many wonderful student athletes.

To all our league volunteers for your dedication.

To each and everyone of you who believe in our youth and realize that they are the future.

We believe the recipients we honor today prove that the future is in good hands.

Go Ahead...

Excellence is not achieved in the first step. Yet, that first step must be taken if excellence is to be created. Greatness is not attained in the initial effort. Yet, greatness comes only through making that first effort, and then many more.

Go ahead and begin. Get started. Take the first step toward your dreams. Make the first effort to work toward greatness. You will learn a lot as you go, and perfect your approach. The important thing now is to get started and keep going.

