

**NEW YORK STATE PUBLIC  
HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION**



*Education Through Interscholastic Athletics*

**NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT**

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**Contact Information:**

Chris Watson, Dir. of Communications  
Phone: 518-690-0771 Ext. 19  
[cwatson@nysphsaa.org](mailto:cwatson@nysphsaa.org)

**NYSPHSAA Announces Harrison High School as  
Community Service Challenge Champions for Winter 2019**

**LATHAM, NY-** The New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA) is proud to announce Harrison High School as the winner of the Winter 2019 NYSPHSAA Community Service Challenge. Harrison was chosen by the NYSPHSAA Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) comprised of two current student-athletes from each of NYSPHSAA's 11 member sections.

Established in the Fall of 2010, the program encourages students to stay active in their communities. This year, NYSPHSAA has partnered with Team Up for Community to allow online submissions. The Team Up for Community portal provides schools the opportunity to showcase community service projects which ultimately fosters young peoples' sense of civic engagement and community thus helping them achieve their educational, developmental and social goals. This is the first year NYSPHSAA will be honoring Community Service Challenge Champions after each sport season. This winter, 91 projects were submitted by NYSPHSAA member schools with a total of 5,350 student-athletes involved in the projects equaling over 74,010 hours volunteered.

Three Harrison student-athletes, Josh Cooper, Matthew Cooper and Connor Novak created and led a program called Athletes in Action (AIA) with the goal of integrating community service into the Harrison High School athletics program. AIA partnered with Pleasantville Cottage School which is one of the most respected residential treatment programs in the country. Pleasantville Cottage School is home to emotionally troubled boys and girls between the ages of 7-15. One of the goals of AIA's partnership with the cottage kids is mentorship and friendship. Each sports team from Harrison High School visits Pleasantville Cottage School once per season to play its specific sport with the residents.

“I am honored that Athletes in Action has been recognized by the NYSPHSAA,” said Josh Cooper AIA co-creator. “AIA was created because we felt Harrison athletes could make a positive impact on the kids at Pleasantville Cottages through friendship and fun, sports-related activities. The Harrison athletes are also rewarded with the great feeling that comes from helping other kids.” Cooper was grateful for the support of Chris Galano, Harrison Athletic Director, from the very beginning and hopes other athletic directors will see the value in this program and adopt Athletes in Action in their schools.

“Here at Harrison we often speak to our athletes about the importance of having a positive impact on and off the field or court, said Chris Galano Harrison Athletic Director. “Athletes in Action is a perfect example of having an impact and winning outside of a game situation. The best part of this program is it was created and driven by students.”

Applications for the spring Community Service Challenge are now being accepted and can be submitted by visiting <http://nysphsaa.org/Educational-Programs/Community-Service>. Deadline is June 3, 2019. For questions, please contact NYSPHSAA Assistant Director, Kristen Jadin at [kjadin@nysphsaa.org](mailto:kjadin@nysphsaa.org) or 518.690.0771.

**Previous Community Service Challenge State Champions:**

2019 (Fall) – Canandaigua Academy (Section V)/Eastport South Manor (Section XI)

2018 – Farmingdale High School (Section VIII)

2017 – Akron High School (Section VI)

2016 – Mahopac High School (Section I)

2015 – Kings Park High School (Section XI)

2014 – Arlington High school (Section I)

2013 – Columbia High School (Section 2)

2012 – Ossining High School (Section I)

2011 – Adirondack Central School (Section III)

About NYSPHSAA (Twitter: @NYSPHSAA | Facebook: NYSPHSAA | YouTube: NYSPHSAASports):

The New York State Public High School Athletic Association Inc. is a non-profit, voluntary, educational service organization composed of public, parochial, and private schools dedicated to providing equitable and safe competition for the students of its member schools. The organization conducts 32 championship events and governs the rules and regulations of high school athletics in New York State. Membership is open to secondary schools providing interschool athletic activities for boys and girls in grades 7-12.

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