

Alan Bell Memorial Award Nomination Application

Criteria:

The Alan Bell Memorial Award is given to a Lower Moreland High School senior who has faced adversity, grown from his/her own hardship and/or made a significant difference in the life of another person.

Who Can Nominate:

The nomination for the award can be made by a counselor, teacher, classmate or community member. A student may also self-nominate, but it's preferable that someone else nominates him/her.

How to Nominate/Apply:

Please complete and e-mail this completed form to info@alanslegacy.org.

Deadline for Nominations

April 15th 2011

Please complete the following:

I wish to nominate: Ariel Schuman

First Name: Ariel

Last Name: Schuman

E-mail: shoekid878@aol.com

Address: 1185 Lincoln Lane

Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

Please describe (as much as you can, please take up space as needed):
How the nominee has made a significant difference in the life of another person/people/community?

What adversity/hardship the student has experienced and when?

When the world says, "Give up," hope whispers, "Try it one more time."

~Author Unknown

In the four years I have had the privilege of coaching Ariel Schuman, I have come to find that of her countless extraordinary qualities, perhaps her greatest is the unwavering hope and optimism she brings to everyone she meets, no matter what the situation. This is especially remarkable when taking into consideration the adversity Ariel has overcome in her life. One thing that not many people know about her is that ever since Ariel was a young girl, she has taken on the role as one of the primary care-takers to her older sister, Sarah. Now twenty-two, Sarah lives with epilepsy and struggles with several other obstacles that make living on her own impossible. Because of her special needs, the roles are reversed, and it is often Ariel who acts as "big sister" to Sarah. Whereas it can be a daunting task for a parent to get most high school students to do simple chores around the house, tasks that would be unthinkable to most people are commonplace for Ariel. I vividly remember one day at practice when Ariel was not her typical, outgoing self. I pulled her aside to ask her what was wrong. This was the first time I had ever seen Ariel break down and get teary-eyed. She explained to me that when she had gotten home from practice the night before, she found Sarah lying in a pool of her own vomit. She was conscious, but was unable to register what had happened and could not care for herself. I apologize for the bluntness of this story, but this is the reality that Ariel may deal with on any given day. From days like this, to days where Ariel is anxiously awaiting the results of a surgery that Sarah may be

going through, she is able to maintain a positive outlook on life, and is often the girl to which others go to unload their own personal problems. Furthermore, while to anyone else this responsibility might seem like a burden, Ariel not only embraces the challenge with poise and grace, but it is also apparent that this experience has helped shape her into the incredible young woman she is today.

With that said, Ariel is without a doubt the finest young woman that I have ever met in my life. In my career as a teacher and coach, I have never encountered someone as mature, loyal, selfless, and passionate as she is at such a young age. This is partially attributed the hardship she has had to overcome, but also is due to her positive attitude, phenomenal listening skills, and her uncanny ability to always be the voice of reason and hope that encourages herself and everyone around her to be better people. In fact, all of the characteristics which she possesses enabled me to make one of the easiest and best decisions of my coaching career – naming her a captain of our team. Although only a sophomore, and certainly not the most athletically talented girl on the team, her abilities to make others around her comfortable, to lead a group of people, and to gain the respect of both her peers and the upperclassmen made her the obvious choice to take on that role.

Ariel is the type of person whose performances both on and off the track evoke emotion and inspire others to better themselves. This is especially impressive because, as I mentioned before, Ariel is not the most talented or fastest girl on the team. Although I know it pains her not to be able to make the type of athletic contribution she wants, her positive nature and extraordinary generosity are more valuable than the ability to win a race. In fact, what she lacks in athletic ability, she more than makes up for in her dedication to and passion for each and every member of our team. Whether it is her chronic struggles with shin splints, swollen ankles, or an inflamed hip flexor, this young lady battles through pain and practice day in and day out without uttering a complaint. Her strength and perseverance are qualities that inspire others around her to better themselves.

Two of my biggest wishes as a coach would be for her to achieve greatness in the capacity that she dreams about and deserves, and for every girl on our team to have a heart the size of hers. I often tell her that she is the heart and soul of our team, and that we would not have gotten where we are today without her sacrifice and countless contributions. Under her tenure as captain of our squad, our girls have improved leaps and bounds. Last year, in fact, Lower Moreland Girls' Track and Field Team won the Bicentennial Athletic League Team Championship for the first time since 1992 – Ariel is a huge reason for that feat.

Not only is she a phenomenal daughter, sister, friend, leader, and athlete, but her contributions to the Lower Moreland School community should be noted too. From countless volunteer work, to heading various fundraising groups at school, to her duties as captain of our team, Ariel remains poised and compassionate. She has been involved in THON for the past four years and was a THON captain this year. She is also secretary of National Honor Society and was selected as Student of the Month in January. Furthermore, one of her teachers, Mr. Anthony Tamaccio, recently selected Ariel to be the first Lower Moreland student interviewed on www.patch.com as that week's "Whiz Kid" (You can read the full article at <http://lowermoreland.patch.com/articles/whiz-kid-ariel-schuman-of-lmhs>). He told me that he could not think of anyone to better represent Lower Moreland, saying that she was the first person who popped into his mind. In addition to her already full plate, Ariel finds time to help others cope with various struggles going on in their lives. In fact, there have been several instances when girls on the track team have not only confided in me with their personal dilemmas, but also have gone to Ariel as a trusted peer, whether they knew her well or not. I find this so telling about what kind of person Ariel truly is, in that you do not actually have to be her closest friend to feel close with her. Not only has she become a stronger person as a result of her life experiences, but she has helped others become stronger as well.

Finally, I believe that what is most impressive about Ariel is that she knows who she is, and is not afraid to be herself. No matter what is going on around her, or how difficult a situation may be, the poise, grace, and selflessness with which she carries herself never wavers. I have used those words several times, but I can not say enough about this young lady. In fact, my words probably do not even begin to scratch the surface of the elegant, loyal, and strong person that she has become. Ariel truly is a one of a kind girl – one

that does not come around very often. I have appreciated and am eternally thankful that I have had the opportunity to know and coach her. I have learned so much from her, and she has become my right hand. I never worry if I have to be late to practice, and it is a fantastic feeling as a coach to know that your team is always in good hands. Ariel has touched and changed my life, and has opened my eyes to the kind of daughter I hope to have one day. I also know that I am not the only one whose life she has touched, and I am confident that she would not only be a perfect candidate for this scholarship, but would value and uphold everything that it stands for. In closing, I will leave you with a quote that I introduced to Ariel four years ago to try and motivate her before a race. It is one that stuck with her, and one which I know she understands, appreciates, can relate to, and lives by in every aspect of her life:

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; because there is not effort without error and shortcomings; but who does actually strive to do the deed; who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotion, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement and who at the worst, if he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat.”

~ Teddy Roosevelt

Ariel Schuman is not afraid to dare greatly, is constantly encouraging others to keep trying, and as a result, will be a winner for life. Everyone who has met her and those who have yet to meet her will be better off for simply knowing her.

Nominated by (your information):

First Name: Mary

Last Name: Crossin

e-mail address: mcrossin@lmtsd.org Phone Number: 215-421-2597

Relationship to nominee: Cross Country and Track Coach

The nominee may be contacted if we need further information to make the award decision.

The semifinalists will be asked to write a blurb to describe:

- How has the adversity impacted your life?
- What did the adversity teach you about yourself or life?
- What have you've done to help others?

All submitted applications will become property of Alan's Legacy and could be publish on the website.

Nominators Name: Mary Crossin

Date: 3/29/11