



Rising Stars: Kennison Adams makes mark with 450-plus community service hours as an Explorer

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - Edwardsville High School senior Kennison Adams has a spirit about her community that few her age possess.

Recently, Adams was recognized with a 2018 Prudential Spirit of Community Award. She has been a member of Edwardsville Fire Department's Explorer Post from 2014 to 2017 and has recorded more than 450 community service hours. Kennison has also carried an A average through high school. She is the sister of acclaimed Edwardsville High School tennis player Callaghan Adams. Callaghan is now on an athlete scholarship with Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville.

Kennison has been an outstanding runner since she attended Liberty Middle School, then at EHS, competing on a state level. She is also a talented tennis player and swimmer, following in the footsteps of her sister Callaghan as a top-notch athlete. She said running is by far her favorite sports activity and she hopes to continue that as she moves on to college.

"Being a member of the Explorer Post has been an experience like no other," Adams said. "I have gotten the opportunity to be trained in a multitude of things, including CPR, Bloodborne Pathogen Safety, and First Aid. I have also learned how to start IVs, draw blood, and use a bone drill. As a result, I have been allowed to ride along on fire and ambulance calls, helping out when needed. Each call has been a great hands-on learning opportunity that has also allowed me to connect with people in the community."

Kennison said she loved being able to be a part of serving and helping people when they needed it the most.

"Each call was very surreal because we left knowing that all was done that could be to help that person. When I do ride time, I help make sure the ambulance is stocked before a call, and it is cleaned up afterwards. Sometimes if we are on a scene and something is needed from the truck, I run back and grab it for them to help out. It has been a really neat experience to see how the first responders work with those in the community, work together, and impact lives in many great ways.

"I have learned a lot from the Post Program and have made many great relationships with those at the department, in the program with me, and in the community. I have logged over 250 hours since 2014 through this program doing ride time with the responders or helping out with community events."

"I have helped with the St. Baldrick's Pediatric Cancer Fundraiser, Open Houses, Community Parades, and cleaning up of local festivals and homecomings," she said. "These opportunities allowed me to connect with the community greatly, and it was a really neat experience to see the impact that the Explorer Post had on the town."

Being a member of the Explorer Post has solidified Kennison's desire to work in the medical field.

“I was inspired by all I saw the paramedics do and loved being able to help people when they needed it the most,” Kennison said. “My involvement in the Post combined my two passions of medicine and helping others, making it the perfect fit for personal growth. Next year I plan to major in neuroscience as a pre-medicine student, and I am really excited to take all I have learned and apply it so I can continue to serve others.”

With the award, Adams receives \$1,000, a medallion and trip to Washington, D.C., in late April. She will be with two honorees from each of the other states for four days of national events.