

Abbigail Jarnagin of Alton High School is Honored as a Student of the Month for April

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ALTON/GODFREY - Abbigail Jarnagin of Alton High School was honored as one of the Students of the Month for April at a regular meeting of the Rotary Club of Alton-Godfrey at Gentelin's Restaurant.

During high school, Abbigail Jarnagin took English Honors for all four years of high school, which included this past year where she took two English AP courses. She has also taken Environmental Science, which is also an AP course. She has received college credits through Lewis and Clark Community College for Lifeguard Certification and Water Safety Instructor Certification. She states that being able to have these courses available to her as a high school student has been very beneficial to her future plans.

Alton High has given her many opportunities to display her leadership skills and take action in her community. This school year, she was co-president of the Alton FCCLA Chapter. But she also got the chance to serve as a 2021-2022 Illinois FCCLA State Officer. FCCLA stands for Family Career and Community Leaders of America. It is a student-led organization that primarily focuses on community service. Since becoming a state officer, she has held many leadership positions and responsibilities. Her responsibilities included, conducting and running statewide meetings and conferences, but also developing community service projects. She had to connect with not only Alton FCCLA members, but members in the state and nationally. FCCLA allows members to connect with their community and even compete in competitions that fall under Family and Consumer Science courses. Members are able to compete at section, state and national levels. This school year she is a national qualifier for my project "Chapter in Review" and will compete in San Diego, California this June.

Within her community, she has been able to give back to those in need. Before the pandemic, she assisted with preparing and serving meals to those who stayed in half-way houses in Alton. Unfortunately, when the pandemic arose, she could not help with the meals. But another member of the Alton FCCLA chapter had an idea. The idea was that once a month, the members would go into the food classrooms to help prepare frozen-ready-to-cook casseroles for the Salvation Army to serve to those that stay at the half-way houses in Alton. Abby was able to assist with making the casseroles and we were able to make about ten casseroles in an hour. The clothing and textiles class had plenty of left-over fabrics, so she decided to make dog toys out of them and donate them to The 5 A's in Alton. She has also been able to participate in Alton's City-Wide Clean Up all four years of high school. Every year, The Nature Institute hosts a special event on Halloween where families are invited to bring their kids and take part in activities for free. To assist The Nature Institute, she has dressed up in costumes of woodland creatures, painted kids' faces, led group activities, such as forest-themed games, roasting marshmallows, and leading the way on a nature walk. She also assisted with Alton FCCLA's Annual Charity Fashion Show last month where she helped raise money for Relay for Life. Abby has always been devoted to giving back to my community because she believes that she can make a positive impact on at least one person.

Though FCCLA was her primary focus for this past school year, she was also involved with the high school's club, RRSK. As well as that, she had the wonderful job of being a swim instructor at Lewis and Clark Community College. She interacted with different age groups by teaching kids how to swim, and even getting adults to be active by doing workouts in the pool.

This past summer, Abby got to attend a leadership seminar sponsored by the Illinois Coordinating Council for Career and Technical Student Organizations. This is where career and technical student organizations get together to become better leaders in their organizations. She got to work with members from DECA, FBLA, Skills USA, HOSA, FFA and many other organizations. Abby also had the amazing privilege of speaking on behalf of CTE at an Illinois State Board of Education meeting in February.

After high school, Abby plans on attending Lewis and Clark Community College and then transferring to Eastern Illinois University to major in Family and Consumer Sciences Education. She hopes to return to Alton High School to teach students and give back to the high school.