

Ella Stepanek Honored as GCHS Scholar Athlete of the Year

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GRANITE CITY – Senior three-sport student-athlete Ella Stepanek was named the 2021-22 Granite City High School Scholar Athlete of the Year, as announced by GCHS.

Stepanek will be recognized at Busch Stadium on May 11 as part of the 56th Annual *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* Scholar Athlete Team. In addition, she will be recognized in the special section of the newspaper and online at STLhighschoolsports.com.

"I'm extremely honored to have received this award, but without support from my coaches and family I wouldn't have been able to earn this achievement. They've helped me maintain a schedule filled with sporting events and school functions," said Stepanek. "Even though it is challenging to maintain the demands of both sports and school, I think that in doing so it has given me an immense amount of pride in my achievements for both athletics and academics. I have learned that if I am willing to put the work in, success will eventually follow, and the responsibility that comes with both will be worth it."

Stepanek is a three-sport student-athlete (volleyball, basketball, softball) at GCHS and is headed to Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in the fall and is undecided on a major. She is the daughter of Paul and Sarah Stepanek.

"Our mission as a school is to produce some of the most well-rounded citizens in our community. Ella Stepanek is a tremendous example of one of those citizens," said GCHS Principal Daren DePew. "She stands above the rest as a student-athlete by participating in three sports along with maintaining a 5.6 GPA. She is without question, deserving of the honor of GCHS Scholar Athlete. Congratulations to Ella and her family."

Athletic Honors: Eight varsity letters (basketball (4), volleyball (3), softball (1) ... Rookie of the Year Award (basketball) ... Freshman Captain Award (volleyball) ... Woody Moad Heart and Soul Award (basketball) ... Varsity Captain award (basketball) ... Varsity Team Leader award (volleyball) ... Two-time Athlete of the Month (basketball) ... Athlete of the Month (volleyball), 2020 Alton Invitational All-Tournament Team (volleyball).

Academic Honors: National Honor Society ... Student Council ... Rotary Student of the Month ... Elks Student of the Month ... Secondary Honors Program all four years ... Illinois State Scholar ... American Legion Auxiliary Illini Girls State ... GC All Warrior Award ... Saturday Scholars Program ... May Court.

To be considered a Scholar Athlete, students must be in the top 25 percent of their senior class academically and must play at least one varsity sport.

"I want to thank the individuals who have helped me on my high school journey as well as the incredible girls that I have called my teammates for the past four years," Stepanek added.

For more information about Granite City School District #9, visit www.gcsd9.net.