

# Senior awards highlight best of best

By **KATHERINE LACAZE**  
For Seaside Signal

Before deciding which graduating senior from Seaside High School will receive which scholarship or award, the board members of Seaside Scholarships Inc. interview each applicant to get to know their story and the value they place on furthering their education.

“You have to take one individually and look at their situation,” board president Celine McEwan said.

This year, the nonprofit organization — which manages more than a dozen scholarships for other groups and individuals in addition to their own investment grants and achievement scholarships — distributed about \$51,000 to the class of 2019. Those awards were acknowledged with numerous others from the community during the high school’s Senior Scholarship Awards night June 4.

Community and family members, along with teachers, administrators and other school staff, packed the high school’s cafeteria to honor the seniors receiving multiple scholarships from local individuals and organizations.

“I’m constantly amazed at the generosity from our community to support our young people,” high school principal Jeff Roberts said.

While he and other administrators get to know and work directly with the students, observing “the things they accomplish every year and throughout



**Hugh Kerwin hands out scholarships from the Seaside Elks Lodge at the Seaside High School Senior Scholarship Awards night on June 4. Award winners include Parker Conrad, Hayley Rollins and Dylan Meyer.**

their time in high school,” he said, the community doesn’t necessarily “get to see that, but is still committed to making an incredible investment in their future.”

“Tonight is really about celebrating them and celebrating our community for their generosity and making a lot of these young people’s dreams come true,” Roberts said.

The Seaside Scholarships board and high school’s counseling department helped process a combined 934 applications for about 50 students to determine the recipients for more than 100 local scholarships and awards. The communities of Seaside, Gearhart, and Cannon Beach together

provided \$146,000 for graduating seniors. Seaside students also received roughly \$36,000 worth of county-wide awards.

Business owners or representatives from various organizations and families attended the awards night to announce the recipients and deliver the scholarships. Occasionally, teachers and administrators also filled that role.

Seaside School District board chair Mark Truax, who announced a couple scholarships, thanked the Class of 2019 for their contributions to the district and school.

“It’s been a pleasure and an honor to watch you guys grow up,” he said.

## Seaside Scholarships’ mission

When Seaside Scholarships was established about eight years ago, their mission was to increase the amount of money available to graduating seniors. In 2011, they gave a \$1,000 scholarship to one student. Now, they manage numerous memorial scholarships along with those for various companies and organizations, such as Lum’s Auto Center, Coastal Family Health Center, and the Cannon Beach American Legion.

This year, they are managing scholarships from three new groups: the Seaside Aquarium, the Evergreen Masonic Lodge, and a memorial scholarship for Takeko “Susie” Wahl, who

worked several years at the high school.

All the scholarships are governed by criteria, such

as the student’s GPA, projected field of study, gender, or other characteristics. The board members also factor in financial need and the other scholarships and financial aid students are receiving. This year especially, they interviewed numerous deserving seniors, McEwan said, adding, “It was very hard to say, ‘Who doesn’t get something?’”

Not confident to evaluate students solely from how they appear on paper, the board interviews each student to get a better understanding of who they are as a person, what challenges they have faced and overcome, and what other talents or skills they possess.

“This class has had a lot of adversity — poverty, deceased parents, homelessness — it’s just like, oh my lord, and they have done so well,” McEwan said. “You just sit there and think, ‘Please, don’t stop. Keep going.’ They’ve got a lot of grit in this class.”

Katherine Lacaze

# Seaside’s student-athletes honored at awards night

By **KATHERINE LACAZE**  
For Seaside Signal

During Seaside High School’s Sports Awards Night, as Athletic Director Aaron Tanabe announced the names of student-athletes who maintained a 4.0 GPA at least one term during the 2018-19 school year, the large stage at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center swarmed with students being recognized.

The dozens of students who were able to keep a 4.0 GPA while also participating in sports was “a testament to the kids” and their dedication to academics and attitude, as well as athletics, Tanabe said.

“The first thing college coaches ask you is, ‘hey, what are these kids’ grades?’, because they don’t want to waste their time on someone who doesn’t qualify and can’t pass the clearing house,” he added.

The Sports Awards Night, held June 3, is an annual tradition that recognizes student-athletes for a variety of accomplishments in front of their friends, family, and community.

## Qualifying for State

To kick off the night, Tanabe acknowledged all the athletic programs and clubs with students that qualified for their respective Oregon School Activities Association state competition, either individually or as teams.

“Making the OSAA bracket is huge for building a program,” Tanabe said. “Any time you make it that far, the kids should be recognized.”

The programs that qualified for state included:

- Boys soccer, which had a quarterfinals appearance;
- Football, which was runner-up in the 4A division;
- Swimming, which participated in the 200-freestyle and four-person relay at state;
- Wrestling, which had a student take fifth place and another who was a quarterfinalist in their divisions;
- Girls basketball, which had a first-round appearance at state;
- Boys basketball, which had a 24-4 record and was runner-up in the 4A division;



**Seaside High School Athletic Director Aaron Tanabe recognizes the school’s student-athletes for maintaining good grades while participating in sports during the Sports Awards Night on June 3.**

- Choir, which placed sixth at state;
- Band, which placed fifth at state;
- Baseball, which qualified for state for the first time since 2010;
- Girls golf, which placed ninth at state;
- Boys golf, which was runner-up in the 4A division;
- Track and field, which had five students qualify for state in several events and placed in a few.

Students also were recognized for their individual accomplishments within their program, such as being named to first- or second-team all-state or league MVP, among others.

Balancing academics and sports

Additionally, Tanabe acknowledged the academic all-league athletes. To qualify, students must have a 3.5 or above in the term preceding their sport. The students were split into three different categories according to GPA: 3.5 to 3.74; 3.75 to 3.99; and 4.0.

“Being a student athlete is not an easy thing,” Tanabe said. “It’s really impressive.”

Baseball coach Dan McFadden echoed that sentiment.

“This night is just quite a tribute to how hard these kids work,” he said. “I was actually quite surprised when I got the list of how many of them had GPAs above 3.5, with all the traveling and everything.”

Student athletes also received certificates for playing three different sports throughout the school year.

sports for four years, or being involved in an athletic program each term of their entire high school career. The six graduating seniors with that accomplishment were Anna Hudleston, Dylan Meyer, Samson Sibony, Duncan Thompson, Payton Westholm, and Katie Zagata.

“These kids are a huge part of why athletic programs in high school are sustainable,” Tanabe said. “These kids are selfless. ... They enjoy the sport and they really do it for the community.”

In general, he said, for a town of Seaside’s size, high school sports are especially important for fostering community spirit and morale, as those who attended the football or boys basketball championship games can attest to.

“It galvanizes the community and gets them excited about sports,” he said. “Everybody’s proud because they’re wearing ‘Seaside’ across their chest and they’re representing the community.”

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