

2015 Specialized Student-Athlete Leadership Award

The Specialized Student Athlete Leadership Award honors a male and female student-athlete annually who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, sportsmanship, academic performance and volunteerism in their team, school and community.

Hannah Heydinger, St. Stephen's Episcopal School, Texas Interscholastic Mountain Bike League



Hannah joined the St. Stephen's founding team in her freshman year as the only female student-athlete. The boys asked her to help them because they couldn't field a new school team without a female rider. Although she'd ridden her bike to school since 6th grade, she had never been mountain biking. She found that she loved it — and, much to her surprise, was very good at it, ending up first in state for freshman-sophomore girls. Hannah went on to recruit several other girls onto the team and became the team captain in her Junior year this past season. The Spartans, despite being a relatively small school and team, finished second in state last year. For her Girl Scout Gold Award — an achievement similar to the Boy Scout Eagle badge — Hannah took on the challenge of leading a large group of student volunteers in clearing brush to create clear line of sight for automobile drivers and posting signs for a crosswalk where a bike trail crosses the main drive into her school. During the project she learned of several near-accidents when mountain bikers, cross country runners, and dog walkers exited the brush to cross the road. To raise awareness, she also created a stop-action video message. Off

the bike, Hannah is a National Merit Commended Scholar with a 3.6 GPA at her academically rigorous school. This year, Hannah will race Varsity again. She has said that her greatest joy is recruiting and helping younger riders and sharing her love of biking and team spirit. Please join me in congratulating Hannah!



“When I was teaching a middle school girl to do a technical climb. I told her, “I’m going to miss him a lot (Coach Andrew Andres), because he knew what I was capable of better than I did, so he would strive me to push myself and I would.” And she turned to me and said, “That’s who you are you to me right now.”