

Varsity Wrestling Team Honored With Legislative Resolution

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Members of the Chautauqua Lake/Panama/Westfield Varsity Wrestling Team are presented with legislative recognition from Sen. Catharine Young for earning the 2015-16 Joe Annarella Team Sportsmanship Award. P-J Photo Remington Whitcomb

CHAUTUAQUA LAKE — Sportsmanship is a sometimes forgotten aspect of athletic competition. However, state Sen. Catharine Young proposed and adopted a legislative resolution to a local wrestling team, permanently honoring it for its dedication to the craft.

In 2016, the Chautauqua Lake/Panama/Westfield varsity wrestling team earned the Joe Annarella Team Sportsmanship Award. Presented annually by the Southern Tier Wrestling Officials Association, the award is presented to the team and staff that best exemplifies the qualities of good sportsmanship.

Annarella, who was inducted into the Chautauqua Sports Hall of Fame in 1993, was a physical education and health instructor, and coach at Cassadaga High School from 1954-76. He pioneered the school's wrestling program in 1955, and remained coach until 1964, winning nine Section VI Class B Titles over that span.

Tragically, he was killed in an automobile accident on his way to officiate a wrestling match in 1976. Posthumously, the sportsmanship award was renamed in his memory.

To honor the team's accomplishment for posterity, Sen. Young proposed a legislative resolution congratulating the team, which was adopted in the senate on June 2, 2016.

On Thursday, Sen. Young distributed suitably engrossed copies of the resolution to several team members, and personally congratulated them on their accomplishment.

"This resolution, passed in your honor, becomes part of the state of New York's permanent record," Sen. Young said. "So, years down the road, you can go look it up, or your great-great-grandchildren can go look it up and see (your accomplishment.)"

In epitome, the resolution acknowledges the legislative body's responsibility to recognize those in the community who achieve outstanding success in athletic competition and have inspired those among them.

Additionally, it recognizes the athletes, coaches and staff of the 2015-16 team, who follow: Brendon Rowe, Bret Babcock, Austin Bourgeois, Derek Ecklund, Ben Szymanowski, Corbin Brown, Noah Dorman, Trey Hoyt, Bryce Rowe, Nate Wilson, Jimmy Wolfe, Tommie Adolph, Kendall Carlson, Mark Ecklund, Kale Gilbert, Dylan Gross and Jake Seaburg; Head Coach Brad Rowe; Assistant/JV Coach Adam Erickson; Assistant/Modified Coach Ken Rowe; Unpaid Assistants: Darwin Rowe, Lucas Weidman, Peter Dorman, Dan Hicks, Mark Gilbert and Lee Gilmore; Managers: Carson D'Anthony and Connor Nowicki; and Statistician: Autumn Gross.

"This just goes to show what a great group of kids we had there," Rowe said. "It's a real honor on my part to work with all these communities that we draw upon for these kids. It feels really good to get this kind of recognition."