

PRESS RELEASE

February 14, 2013

**ESSEX COUNTY FREEHOLDERS
HONOR OUTSTANDING FALL SPORTS ATHLETES AND COACHES**

**Board Recognizes Athletes and Coaches Named
2012 State and County Athletes and Coaches of the Year by *The Star-Ledger*
And a National Girls Volleyball Coach of the Year**

(Newark, NJ) – During its Wednesday, February 13, 2013, meeting at the Hall of Records, the Essex County Board of Chosen Freeholders honored eleven outstanding fall sports athletes and coaches from Essex County high schools who were recognized by *The Star-Ledger* as New Jersey or Essex County athletes or coaches of the year in their respective sports, plus a coach who was named a national coach of the year.

Those athletes named by *The Star-Ledger* were Amanda Cassera of Fairfield (West Essex H. S.), the New Jersey field hockey “player of the year”, and the following Essex County “players of the year”: Jasmine Cole of Montclair (Montclair Kimberley Academy) for field hockey; Kaila Jenkins of Montclair (Montclair H. S.) for girls soccer; Juliet Kohli of Montclair (Mount Saint Dominic Academy) for girls cross-country; Jamie Schneck of Livingston (Livingston H. S.) for girls volleyball; Akrum Wadley of Newark (Weequahic/University high schools) for football; and from Millburn (Millburn H. S.), Jane Bary for girls tennis, Rohan Sood for boys soccer and Robert Stone for boys cross-country. The Board also honored the newspaper’s state field hockey “coach of the year”, Injoo Han of Montclair Kimberley Academy, and Essex County girls cross-country “coach of the year”, Asim Kohli of Mount Saint Dominic Academy. Additionally, Livingston H. S. girls volleyball coach, Al Partelow, was honored for having been named the girls volleyball “coach of the year” by the National Federation of State High School Associations.



Essex County athletes and coaches were honored by the Board during its Wednesday, February 13th, meeting held at the Hall of Records. They are: (front row, l. to r.) Coach Asim Kohli, Jane Bary, Juliet Kohli, Jasmine Cole, Kaila Jenkins,

Akrum Wadley, Freeholder Vice President Patricia Sebold, Coach Al Partelow and Coach Injoo Han; (2nd row, l. to r.) Robert Stone, Rohan Sood, Jamie Schneck, Amanda Cassera and Freeholder Carol Clark; and (back row, l. to r.) Freeholders Leonard Luciano and Rufus Johnson. PHOTO BY GLEN FRIESON

The program was emceed by Freeholder Vice President Patricia Sebold of Livingston, and she was joined by Freeholders Brendan Gill of Montclair, Rufus Johnson of Newark, Gerald Owens of South Orange and Leonard Luciano of West Caldwell in presenting the Board's commendations to the honorees. Freeholder Sebold opened the program by saying that the evening was "special" because the Board would honor nine outstanding high school athletes and three outstanding coaches from all across Essex County who represent seven different schools and five different towns. Telling the audience that she was an English teacher at West Orange H. S. for thirty years, she commented, "Although my focus was on academics during those years, I also learned just how much time and effort our student-athletes commit to honing their athletic skills, and also saw the hard work of the coaches who not only teach their individual athletes, but also mold them into cohesive teams. I have great respect for all of you, and I am just delighted to recognize you tonight."

Amanda Cassera of Fairfield, a senior at West Essex H. S., was named *The Star-Ledger's* New Jersey field hockey "player of the year". During her four-year career, she scored a total of 138 goals and helped lead her team to three Essex County Tournament championships, four Super Essex Conference championships, three state sectional titles and a Group 2 state championship. In 2012, Amanda ranked second in the state in both goals scored (54) and total points (128), scored at least three goals in fourteen games and five or more goals in three games, and is also only the third player in her school's history to score 100 or more career goals. She received 1st Team all-state, Group 2, county and conference honors, and was named an NFHCA New Jersey Regional All-American and 2nd Team National All-American. Amanda will continue playing field hockey at Boston University, where she will enter a six-year program leading to a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree.

Jane Bary, a sophomore at Millburn H. S., was named *The Star-Ledger's* Essex County girls tennis "player of the year". During the 2012 season, she helped lead her team to a 23-2 record and the Group 4 state championship, and at first singles, she compiled a record of 24-4 and 21-3 in team play. Jane was named to the 3rd Team all-state and to the 1st Team all-Group 4, county and conference teams. She is ranked #75 in the Eastern Section of the USTA and #6 in New Jersey by Tennisrecruiting.net.

Jasmine Cole of Montclair, a senior at Montclair Kimberley Academy, was named *The Star-Ledger's* Essex County field hockey "player of the year". As captain, she led her team to an 18-4 record, its first North 1, Group 1 sectional title since 2001, and third Prep B tournament crown in the past four years. In her senior season, she set a school single-season record by scoring 37 goals with 20 assists, recorded at least a hat trick in eight games, had eleven multiple-goal games, and scored four goals in two games. Jasmine was named to the 2nd Team all-state and 1st Team all-group, county, Prep B and conference teams. She was also honored as an NJFHCA Regional All-American and was selected for the Futures Elite, the program from which the members of the United States National Team are chosen. Jasmine will continue her playing career and education at the University of Pennsylvania.

Kaila Jenkins, a senior at Montclair H. S., was named *The Star-Ledger's* Essex County girls soccer "player of the year". In 2012, as captain and defensive sweeper, Kaila helped her team limit its opponents to one or no goals in 20 of 24 games, record thirteen shutouts, compile a record of 18-3-3, win its second straight Essex County Tournament championship, the North Jersey, Section 1, Group 4 title, and finish the season ranked as the #5 team in New Jersey, the #4 Group 4 team and the #1 team in Essex County. She was also named to 1st Team all-state, Group 4, county and conference teams. Kaila will continue her studies and soccer career at the University of Pittsburgh.

Juliet Kohli of Montclair, a freshman at Mount Saint Dominic Academy, was named *The Star-Ledger's* Essex County girls cross-country "runner of the year". In 2012, she won individual championships at the Super Essex County Conference American Division and Essex County competitions, leading her team to the team championships at both events; in N. J. Non-Public A competition, Juliet's times helped her team capture the school's first-ever Non-Public A State Championship and earn a Top 10 ranking in New Jersey. She also recorded the second-best time in conference history, and posted the best time in Non-Public A State Group competition by a freshman in 2012. Juliet was named to the 1st Team all-state Non Public, county and conference teams, and was ranked as the #1 and #4 freshman in the 4K and 5K, respectively, during the cross-country season.

Jamie Schneck, a senior at Livingston H. S., was named *The Star-Ledger's* Essex County girls volleyball "player of the year". During her three-year career, she helped lead her teams to two Group 4 sectional finals, the Group 4 state championship in 2011, two Essex County championships, two Super Essex Conference American Division titles, and to win-loss records of 27-2 and 24-3 in 2011 and 2012. In 2012, Jamie excelled both offensively and defensively: on offense, she recorded 200 kills with a .360 hitting percentage, and a serving percentage of 90% on 215 attempts; on defense, she had 87 digs along with 28 blocks. She was named to the 1st Team all-conference and county teams, as well as to the 2nd Team all-State and 1st Team all-Group 4 teams. Jamie will attend Springfield College in Massachusetts where she will continue to play volleyball and study to be an athletic trainer.

Rohan Sood, a senior at Millburn H. S., was named *The Star-Ledger's* Essex County boys soccer "player of the year". During his outstanding 2012 season, Rohan led his team to a 21-3 record with his impressive and intelligent defensive play that was reflected by the team having allowed only 18 goals while posting 11 shutouts, and during which the team won the Essex County Tournament championship and the Group 4 state title when, on the final kick of his high school career, he scored the game-winning goal in the double overtime championship game. Rohan was named to the 1st Team all-state, Group 4, county and conference teams, and to the National Soccer Coaches Association of America All-Region team. He will continue playing soccer and pursue his studies at Amherst College.

Robert Stone, a junior at Millburn H. S., was named *The Star-Ledger's* Essex County boys cross-country "runner of the year". During his 2012 season, he won the Super Essex Conference Championship Meet and then led his team to the Essex County Cross Country championship. He also won the North Jersey, Section 2 Group 3 title and finished third in the Group 3 State championship, which qualified him to compete in the Meet of Champions where he placed fifth. Robert was named to the 1st Team all-state and 1st Team all-county by the Essex County Track & Field Coaches Association.

Akrum Wadley of Newark, a senior at University H. S., was named *The Star-Ledger's* Essex County football "player of the year" in recognition of his outstanding 2012 season as a member of the Weequahic H. S. Football Team (University H. S. does not have a football program). Akrum led his team to an overall record of 9-3, and all the way to the Group 2 Central sectional state championship game. As his team's leading running back, Akrum rushed for 1,548 yards on only 105 carries, an impressive 14.7 yards per carry, and for 29 touchdowns; he also scored 2 receiving touchdowns and 2 more on special teams, for a season total of 33. He was named to 2nd Team All-State on Offense and 1st Team All-Essex County on Offense, and will continue his studies and football career at the University of Iowa on a football scholarship.

Al Partelow, head coach of the Livingston H. S. Girls Volleyball Team, was named the 2012 girls volleyball "coach of the year" by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), as

well as the NJSIAA girls volleyball “coach of the year” and the recipient of its “Volleyball Legends Award”. This year he coached his team to a 24-3 record, the Essex County Tournament championship, to final rankings as the state’s #13 team and #4 Group 4 team, and to the semifinals of the Group 4 state championship. Partelow began his career as a volleyball coach at Millburn H. S. in 1973 and began his long tenure at Livingston in 1995, where he has coached the girls team ever since, and the boys team since 2000. Over those years, he amassed an overall record of 515-226 with girls teams, including 366-100 at Livingston where his teams have won nine conference, four county, three sectional and two state championships. He has also compiled a 256-73 record with his boys teams at Livingston, for an overall record of 771-299 over his forty-one years of coaching. Prior to this year, Partelow was named both the girls and boys “coach of the year” on the conference, county and state levels on many occasions. He began his career as a Physical Education teacher in 1969 at Westfield H. S. and then taught at Millburn H. S. before joining the staff at Livingston H. S. in 1988, from which he retired in 2010.

Injoo Han, head coach of the Montclair Kimberley Academy Field Hockey Team, was named *The Star-Ledger’s* New Jersey field hockey “coach of the year”. In 2012, she led her team to an 18-4 record (more wins than any other team in school history), reached the semifinals of the Essex County Tournament, captured its 3rd Prep B Tournament championship in the last four years, and its first North Jersey, Section 1, Group 1 sectional title since 2001. She began her coaching career when she joined MKA in 2006 as assistant athletic director and head coach. Two years later in 2008, she was named *The Star-Ledger’s* Essex County field hockey “coach of the year”. An all-state field hockey player in her own right while a student at Montclair H. S., she went on to play at Colby College in Maine.

Asim Kohli, head coach of the Mount Saint Dominic Academy Girls Cross Country Team, was named *The Star-Ledger’s* Essex County girls cross-country “coach of the year”. In 2012, he led the Academy’s team to final rankings as the #8 team in N. J. and the #8 team in the nation among schools with enrollments under 500. The team captured the Super Essex County American Division championship for the fourth straight year, its second Essex County championship in the last three years, and the school’s first-ever Non-Public A State championship, thereby distinguishing it as only the second Essex County girls cross country team to ever win a state championship. Coach Kohli joined Mount Saint Dominic Academy in 2008 as a winter and spring track coach, and then the cross-country coach in 2009. Since then, the cross-country team has been undefeated in dual meet competition, and was the state group meet runner-up in 2010 and in 2011, when it attained its highest-ever state ranking at #3, before capturing its state championship in 2012.

The ceremony was attended by a large crowd of family members, friends and coaches of the honorees.

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