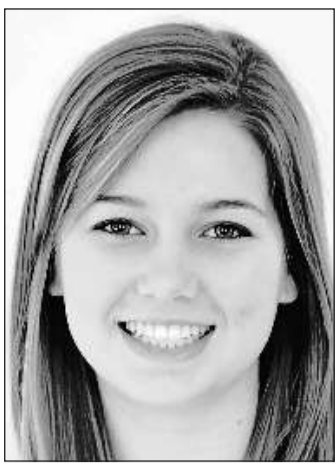


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## Elizabeth Awick

**Hinsdale Central**

As a child, Elizabeth Awick brought toys to the hospital for her younger brother Conor, who was born with a congenital heart defect.

Soon she and her mother were bringing toys to other children as well. But she didn't stop there.

Elizabeth founded the Busy Bags Charitable Foundation and continues to put together baskets of donated toys for children in area hospitals.

"It's really a nice way to give back. And it really did so much for my brother, and I wished other kids had that opportunity," said Elizabeth, now a senior at Hinsdale Central.

In addition to Busy Bags, she co-founded a Teens Against Violence group that raises money to help process the state's backlog of rape kits and also helps at women's shelters.

Guidance counselor Lisa Hikes said Elizabeth has the attitude and energy to achieve her goals. "She's extraordinarily kind, she's mature. I think the concern and her loyalty to the school, loyalty to her friends and family is above and beyond what the average teenager exhibits."

— Melissa Jenco

### Elizabeth Awick

**School:** Hinsdale Central High School

**Hometown:** Hinsdale

**Class:** Senior

**Parents:** Darryl and Kelly Awick

**Sponsor:** Lisa Hikes, guidance counselor

**Community service:** Founder of Busy Bags Charitable Foundation, vice president of Teens Against Violence, student council secretary, Amnesty International, Student Morale Committee, Peer Leadership Club, Athletes Committed to Excellence, National Honor Society.



## Jacqueline Berger

**St. Francis High School**

When it comes to service projects, Jacqueline Berger is one busy gal.

You name it, this St. Francis High School senior probably has done it.

Take Back the Night. Peace Builders. Horseback Healing. Habitat for Humanity. Feed My Starving Children.

Jacqueline says she has built her life around service because she truly enjoys helping others. "It makes me feel good," she said. "It fills your whole soul up. Nothing else has provided me with that feeling."

The Naperville girl spends roughly seven hours a week doing service work.

Her current goal is to be certified as a therapeutic trainer, and she volunteers at Friends for Therapeutic Equine Activities in Winfield. Her long-term goal is to either own a therapeutic riding facility or open a shelter for mothers who are recovering from abuse or addiction. Or maybe both.

"I don't know if I'm a little over-ambitious," she said. "But I'm going to do everything I can to reach that goal."

— Amy Boerema

### Jacqueline Berger

**School:** St. Francis High School

**Hometown:** Naperville

**Class:** Senior

**Parents:** Louis and Mary Kay Berger

**Sponsor:** Trudy Rigney, counselor

**Community service:** Take Back the Night; House of Hope Peace Builders Initiative Program; Horseback Healing; Cowboy Dreams; Habitat for Humanity; group work camp in Seminole, Okla.; coach with Naperville Park District; Marian Park; Misericordia; peer tutoring and



## Molly Farrell

**St. Francis High School**

Molly Farrell could've taken the easy route. The 18-year-old St. Francis High School senior could've easily felt sorry for herself after a tragic accident left her partially paralyzed at age 13.

Farrell dove off a starting block during swim practice and hit her head on the bottom of the pool. The injury left her paralyzed from the neck down. But that's just the beginning of the story.

For the last five years, Molly has struggled to regain the mobility she lost through her accident. Her first few weeks of intensive physical therapy left her with the ability to move her big toe. That early milestone led to more work with the help of the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation.

In return, Molly has spent much of her high school career volunteering for the foundation.

She spoke at a fundraising dinner for the group in New York City that netted \$2 million, and has appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show, the Today Show and on the pages of Teen People.

"Anytime I am having a bad day or am feeling the least bit sorry for myself, I can pick myself up by thinking of this incredible young woman," wrote guidance counselor Trudy Rigney.

— Jack Komperda

### Molly Farrell

**School:** St. Francis High School

**Hometown:** Wheaton

**Class:** Senior

**Parents:** Michael and Nancy Farrell

**Sponsor:** Trudy Rigney

**Community service:** Marian Park Resource Center; Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital; Feed My Children; Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation speaker.



## Meg Kowieski

**Immaculate Conception**

Meg Kowieski, an aspiring graphic artist, knows her opportunities to save the world will be limited while she's designing advertising layouts. So she'll save that for her free time.

The 17-year-old Immaculate Conception senior from Elmhurst views volunteerism as her chance to "help change or even save the world as a regular citizen."

Aside from carrying a 4.28 GPA and being involved in several school and athletic programs, Kowieski makes it a priority to have time for helping others.

"I grew up with parents who sacrificed so much for our family, so I guess that's rubbed off on me," Meg said. "And I learned that once I started helping out in the community, I just couldn't stop myself."

Her volunteer activities include sorting food at the Greater Chicago Food Depository, helping run a grade-school summer camp and working as a peer-juror for the local police department.

"I also enjoy anything I can do for my school since that has also given me so many wonderful opportunities," she said.

— Justin Kmitch

### Meg Kowieski

**School:** Immaculate Conception

**Hometown:** Elmhurst

**Class:** Senior

**Parents:** John and Kathy Kowieski

**Sponsor:** Jean Field, guidance counselor

**Community service:** Peer juror for the Elmhurst Police Department, tutors first-graders, Greater Chicago Food Depository, Sisters of Charity Soup Kitchen, summer camp counselor, cleaned yards on Senior Chore Day.



## Anna Mikulski

**Addison Trail High School**

When Anna Mikulski signed up to fly to Jamaica with the Divine Mercy Polish Mission church group, she knew she wouldn't be hanging out on the beach.

Instead, the Addison Trail senior traveled to the tropical island last summer to wake at 6 a.m., volunteer in a health clinic and teach adults and children to read. And she wouldn't have had it any other way.

"It was very fulfilling and it's really worth your time," she said. "You help someone else, but you also help yourself because you feel so much better about contributing."

Even when she's at home in Addison, Anna spends her after-school hours volunteering to plan Easter egg hunts and library book sales as a National Honor Society member.

And as vice president of her school's Key Club, she just wrapped up the group's annual Toys for Tots drive.

When Anna heads off to college next year to study pre-law and Spanish, she has no plans to stop volunteering.

"I still know I can contribute more," she said. "I want to just make a difference in the world."

— Elisabeth Mistretta

### Anna Mikulski

**Hometown:** Addison

**School:** Addison Trail High School

**Class:** Senior

**Parents:** Antoni and Bogumila Mikulski

**School sponsor:** Laura Magnavite, social studies teacher

**Community service:** Divine Mercy Polish Mission volunteer trip to Jamaica; Key Club vice president; Toys for Tots; coat drive; book drive; Kiwanis Peanut Day; March of Dimes; library book sale; Glen Oaks hospital; Best Buddies.

## Fatima Nasreen Saeed

**College Preparatory School of America**

Some people help out to be noticed, to make a show of doing good works, taking the prominent jobs to earn public rewards.

Fatima Nasreen Saeed is not among that crowd.

Volunteering helps this senior at the College Preparatory School of America grow as a person and understand the society around her.

"A volunteer is aware and active. Volunteering also instills within an individual priceless qualities — among them, humility and responsibility," the 18-year old said.

"When a person places themselves in the position of serving others, they humble themselves and develop a sense of duty toward those who are less fortunate than they are," she said.

In her four years at the school, Fatima consistently demonstrated her beliefs — helping renovate the library, setting up a peer tutoring program and most recently organizing a mentoring system for younger girls.

"This student is one of the few individuals who, at such a young age, possesses the rare mixture of leadership combined with maturity," said Nafe Hussein, the school guidance counselor who nominated her.

Yet she seems happiest flying under the radar. "Volunteering is not about putting on a show, it is about making a difference in both your life and the lives of those to whom you reach out," she said in an essay.

— Catherine Edman

*Editor's note: Photo not submitted.*

### Fatima Nasreen Saeed

**School:** College Preparatory School of America

**Hometown:** Oak Brook

**Class:** Senior

**Parents:** Waheed M. Saeed, Taiba Nasreen

**Sponsor:** Nafe Hussein

**Community service:** Organized school library renovation project; organized peer tutoring program for three years; volunteered with Indian Muslim Relief Council; Islamic Summer Quran Program for Youth assisting children to read and memorize Arabic language and Quranic texts; student council.



## Ann Marcella Fefferman

**Wheaton North**

Ann Marcella Fefferman is the type of person who finds problems and feels a burning frustration until she does something to find a remedy.

She is the founder of possibly the first high school affiliate of the League of Women Voters. After taking an advanced placement course in government, she found a problem to fix.

"We learned about teen apathy in local government," Ann said. "I just felt that that was ridiculous. Students should empower themselves for themselves."

With that mission, Ann led the charge to standardize Wheaton North High School's grading system. Through their efforts, a grade of 90 is no longer a B in one department and an A in another. All teachers bestow a grade of "A" for scores of 90 or above.

Ann said all her volunteer efforts are simply part of being who she is compelled to be. "It's kind of the essence of who I am," she said.

— James Fuller

### Ann Marcella Fefferman

**School:** Wheaton North High School

**Hometown:** Wheaton

**Class:** Senior

**Parents:** Robert and Joan Fefferman

**Sponsor:** Dennis Beemer, school counselor

**Community service:** Founder of League of Women Voters at school; Habitat for Humanity; Naper Settlement; Central DuPage Hospital; student council; Key Club; Citizens Advocacy Center; National Honor Society; swimming assistant; Language Stars; summer assistant at oncology and podiatry clinic and more.



## Maxwell Johnson

**Glenbard West High School**

When it comes to his community, Maxwell Johnson believes volunteering is a gift that just keeps giving.

And he's a fond admirer of gifts.

The Glenbard West High School senior spends much of his free time not only helping out around the school, but also at his church and in area retirement centers, too.

Now 17, he's also worked since seventh grade as a volunteer with Public Action to Deliver Shelter.

"Because he desires to serve the homeless, run with the team, grow as an Eagle Scout, scale high mountains and solve abstract equations, he is a busy young man," guidance counselor Sonja Hoden said in nominating him. "Notably, he takes it all in stride, maintains a healthy perspective, knows his limits and finds plenty of opportunity to laugh and amuse others."

After winning the school's J. Kyle Braid Leadership Award, he went to the organization's training facility out West.

"He has returned to offer even more energy in service to the school and give more of his energy," Hoden said.

— Catherine Edman

### Maxwell D. Johnson

**School:** Glenbard West High School

**Hometown:** Glen Ellyn

**Class:** Senior

**Parents:** Doug and Beth Johnson

**Sponsor:** Sonja Hoden, guidance counselor

**Community service:** Sent 1,650 pounds of clothes to Iraqi children for his Eagle Scout project; PADS; plays violin at Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving services; performs at retirement homes; National Honor Society; senior mentor.



## Lisa Virgilio

**Wheaton Warrenville South**

Lisa Virgilio's parents constantly remind her that people will not remember her for the material things she owns. It's the way she treats others that will make a difference in the world.

"I've always been raised in a volunteering household," she said. "I don't know what I would do without volunteering in my life."

The 17-year-old Wheaton Warrenville South senior started volunteering when she entered the first grade. Her mother, Sue Virgilio, got her involved with the Girl Scouts early in life. Her father, Ted Virgilio, constantly reminded her about helping others.

Lisa started serving at Mass and helping with ministry programs at the St. Daniel the Prophet Church in second grade. During her high school years, she has been teaching religious education on a weekly basis. Just recently, she helped plant roughly 10,000 pink tulips to create awareness about breast cancer.

"I love making other people feel happy," she said.

— Kat Zeman

### Lisa Virgilio

**School:** Wheaton Warrenville South

**Hometown:** Wheaton

**Class:** Senior

**Parents:** Ted and Sue Virgilio

**Sponsor:** Kelly McCabe

**Community service:** Summer camp counselor, program aide and volunteer for the Girl Scouts; Relay For Life walker; serves Mass and teaches religion at St. Daniel the Prophet Church; tutors at Johnson Elementary School; food drive at Wheaton Warrenville South.



## Maggie Writt

**Driscoll Catholic**

Maggie Writt prefers to stay busy. And one of her favorite pastimes is community service.

The Driscoll Catholic High School senior has logged hundreds of volunteer hours — well beyond the curricular requirements — helping in communities and as far away as Mississippi and Kentucky.

"This is something I do for fun," Maggie said. "I don't know what I'd do if I wasn't always busy. I don't like staying in one place a long time."

Maggie, who lives in Carol Stream, has helped at local homeless shelters, made care packages for soldiers in Iraq, collected school supplies, organized charity walkathons, wrapped birthday gifts, made dinner for families staying at Ronald McDonald House in Maywood and helped out in a special education class at Stratford Middle School in Bloomingdale.

"I think I sometimes get more out of it than the people I serve," she said.

Maggie also plays volleyball and softball, is in National Honor Society and is feature editor of the school paper and activity coordinator of Students Against Destructive Decisions.

— Kathryn Grondin

### Maggie Writt

**School:** Driscoll Catholic High School

**Hometown:** Carol Stream

**Class:** Senior

**Parents:** Greg and Bridget Writt

**Sponsor:** Laraine Parker

**Community service:** St. Jude's Children's Hospital; gathered presents for needy children; delivered sandwiches to Chicago homeless; helped in special education class; retreat leader; volunteer trips to Kentucky and Mississippi; Ronald McDonald House; and more.