

## SPARTAN SPIRIT AWARD REPORT

Every year The GBN Parent Association awards a \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior which is called the E.J. Duffy Spartan Spirit Award. A committee of approximately 15 parents (need to be members of the GBN Parent Association) choose the recipient from a group of teacher-nominated students. The winner's scholarship award is presented at the senior awards ceremony in May. The nominees are invited to a breakfast before the assembly where they learn they have been nominated.

Teachers nominate seniors who they feel work hard, and are involved but may not be recognized by other scholarships or awards. It is the Parent Association's hope that the recipients are "unsung heroes" of the school. This could be students who participate in plays/music but are always in the background. They may be on sports teams but are not the superstars or captains. It could also include students who work hard academically but are not recognized with top grades or scholarships.

Volunteers for the committee that chooses the award recipient are usually recruited in August as parents go through the Book Sale. It is beneficial for the committee to be made of parents whose children participate in different activities at Glenbrook North. For example, it is ideal to have parents whose children participate in different things such as band, theatre, the arts, sports, debate and other activities. This helps bring different perspectives to the discussion of who should receive the award. Some of the people who sign up to be on the committee are unable to attend the meeting where the recipient is chosen, so it is best to have 16-18 volunteers. **It is also important to note that parents of seniors cannot serve on the committee.**

The selection committee meets once in the spring, usually the first week of May, to go through the written nominations. The meeting date is chosen by Dr. Tarjan and the chairs convey the information to the committee. The meeting lasts approximately two to three hours. The members read the teacher essays and vote on the winning nominee. The identity of the students is kept secret.

In April, Robin Pehlke (the principal's administrative assistant) sends out the nominating forms to the teachers. She will also collect the forms. The teachers usually have until the end of April to turn in their nominations to Dr. Tarjan's office (Administrative assistant is **Kathy Wicks** **there is a new person for 2016-2017**). Dr. Tarjan's office then edits the nominations so that the identity of the student is not revealed. All references to gender and names are removed. His office also makes copies of the nominations for the volunteer parent committee meeting.

You will contact Dr. Tarjan's office to set dates for meeting. As mentioned, it is usually held the first week of May on a mutually agreeable date for the chairs and Dr. Tarjan. His schedule tends to be busy that time of year so you may need to work around his availability. The committee chairs then notify all the parent volunteers of where and when the meeting will be held. It will be held in a room at GBN and is usually the Green and Gold Conference room behind the SAC.

The meeting lasts approximately 1 ½ - 3 hours depending on the number of nominees. Over the past few years only one meeting was necessary. The members read the teacher essays and vote on the winning nominee. Although no names are mentioned sometimes parent

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volunteers may have an idea who the recipient could be. **It is stressed to the parent volunteers that all information at the meeting is confidential!** The identity of the winner is revealed at the Awards Assembly.

Dr. Tarjan will supply pens, note paper, as well as, the nominations. At the beginning of the meeting, Dr. Tarjan will advise the volunteers of the definition of the Spirit Award in detail and answer any questions they may have. The parent volunteers will then read all of the nominations and take notes. After reviewing the nominations, the committee usually votes on their top 4 – 6 picks depending on how many nominees there are. Previous trends have shown 12-18 students nominated. After that vote the committee discusses the nominees and Dr. Tarjan will answer questions if needed. The picks will be eliminated and the vote taken again until one winner is decided. Dr. Tarjan does help facilitate the meeting, but does not participate in the actual discussions or vote. Eventually the committee chooses one winner.

All of the students who have been nominated are invited to a lunch hosted by Dr. Tarjan where they learn which teacher nominated them. The past few years, The Parent Association has given all the nominated students a token gift. Past gifts have included a GBN key chain, and the last 6 years an engraved glass paperweight (Details enclosed).

It is very hard to choose just one award winner. This award is hopefully given to an “unsung hero” who is **probably not** going to win any other awards but there have been years where the recipient have won multiple awards. Much of the choosing of this award is dependent on how well the nominations are written and often how in depth. In 2016, the Parents’ Association provided a rubric to help the teachers with writing their nominations so they would be similar in length and depth of writing.

It is nice to advise the committee that all of the nominees will receive a gift and recognition from the teacher nominating them at the lunch. Additionally, there is a plaque with the previous winners in the E.J. Duffy Green and Gold Conference room where the winners name will be added.

After the meeting, tell Dr. Tarjan that one of the co-chairs will contact him to get the nominee list. Then e-mail the list to Mark at [sales@myawardpros.com](mailto:sales@myawardpros.com) the owner of Image Specialties of Glenview. They will get them done very quickly for you. He should be contacted at [\(847\) 729-4830](tel:8477294830). He should be contacted in early April to advise him you will need the order again for May. (This could change from year to year depending on what the co-chairs want to have as gifts and also based on how many nominees there are.)

After the winner is selected request the name from Dr Tarjan and have a \$1,000.00 check made out by the treasurer of The Parents’ Association for the recipient. Ideally one or both of the committee chairs should be present at the Awards Assembly to present the award.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Robin Bear by email at [rbearmom@gmail.com](mailto:rbearmom@gmail.com).