

# **Lisa Nelson Memorial Scholarship 2014**

## **Background**

Good evening everyone. My name is Paul Nelson and the awards I am about to present are very near and dear to my heart. I am here tonight to acknowledge the recipients of the second annual Lisa Nelson Memorial Scholarship. It gives my family and I great satisfaction to present scholarship money this evening to two well-deserving seniors in memory of my wife Lisa.

For those of you who do not know, Lisa Nelson was a P.E. teacher and the head volleyball coach here at Ralston Valley for thirteen years. She passed away on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2013 after battling cervical cancer for two years.

To commemorate her life and to ensure that she continues to touch the lives of kids, the Lisa Nelson Memorial Scholarship was established. The fund got its start when our family requested contributions in lieu of flowers at Lisa's services last year. That kicked off the fund and the students, faculty, staff and parents here at Ralston Valley have done the rest.

The collective efforts of so many people in the RV community have made this fund a reality. So many have helped to establish and maintain the fund through generous contributions and by attending annual fundraising events. My family and I thank you for your support. I want to extend a special thank you to the members of Stugo who annually organize and run the "Mustang Stampede" a school sponsored 5K run/walk that directly benefits the scholarship fund. Thank you Stugo for all of your efforts.

Both of tonight's recipients will receive a one thousand dollar college scholarship and they both possess qualities respected by Coach Nelson. They are tremendous students, have experienced athletic achievement and have demonstrated leadership, good character, citizenship, sportsmanship and community involvement.

### **Jonathon Gillespie**

Our male recipient will be attending Duke University in the fall. He is a National Honor Society member carrying a 4.0 GPA. He has been a part of Student Government, Men's Choir, Concert Choir and Shades of Blue. He has served as Student Body President, a Mustang Mentor and as a Junior Escort.

Athletically, he has participated in basketball, tennis, men's volleyball and lacrosse and has competed at the state level in each one of them.

He has been active in the community assisting with food drives to benefit Colorado flood victims, the Arvada Food Bank and the Jeffco Action Center. In addition he has been very active in his church as a youth leader, mentor and educator.

I am proud to introduce Jonathon Gillespie as the male recipient of the Lisa Nelson Memorial Scholarship.

### **Madalena DeAndrea**

Our female recipient will be attending the University of Colorado in Boulder in the fall, where she will be studying as a member of the Honors Program. She is a National Honor Society member carrying a 3.95 GPA. She has been a part of Student Government, Advanced Women's Choir, Mixed Chorus, Shades of Blue and Heaven Sent. She has served as Senior Class President, a Mustang Mentor, a Student Ambassador and as a member of the spirit committee.

Athletically, She is a four-year member of the cheer team. As a senior she was elected the overall captain of the JV and Varsity. During her time as a cheerleader she has received several academic and athletic honors including being selected as an All-American. Her accomplishments in cheer are quite remarkable considering she had to persevere through two torn acl & meniscus tears on the same leg.

She has also been active in the community assisting seniors with technology at the Exempla Lutheran Nursing Home and coaching youth soccer for the EDGE soccer club. In addition she had been very active in her church serving a youth group leader, an educator and a member of her church choir.

I am proud to introduce Madalana DeAndrea as the female recipient of the Lisa Nelson Memorial Scholarship.