

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARDS FOUR SCHOLARSHIPS AT CEREMONY HONORING PALMETTO'S GRADUATING SENIORS

Rainclouds threatened and the temperature hovered near the 90-degree mark, but among the more than 200 Palmetto High graduating seniors, family members, teachers and administrators who filled the seats in Pinecrest Gardens' Banyan Bowl on May 16, the mood was festive. All were gathered for the presentation of the senior awards to the outstanding members of the Class of 2016.

Representatives from the Alumni Association Board were delighted to be in attendance to announce and distribute, for the third year in a row, scholarship checks to four outstanding seniors. The scholarships, each in the amount of \$1500, were awarded this year to Ms. Abigail Hason, Mr. Ross Rosen, and Ms. Kayla Spigelman, while Ms. Morgan Lang received the very first Alumni Association scholarship awarded in honor of two very special people to Palmetto High School, Barry and Barbara Zimmler. This last scholarship was designated for an outstanding graduating senior with also notable athletic achievements.

The Alumni Association Scholarship Committee was charged with the difficult task of selecting scholarship recipients from a substantial pool of extremely talented and accomplished applicants. The Committee was comprised of alumni representing four different decades of graduating classes. Thanks go to Karyn Cunningham, Jeff Cutler, Pamela Garrison, Christopher Sanderson, and Anita Shuffield.

An accomplished violist, ABIGAIL HASON has won numerous music awards and used her talents to entertain patients at the Miami Veterans Administration Hospital. She has participated on the Palmetto varsity lacrosse, cross country, and track teams, and also has served on the Village of Pinecrest Youth Advisory Council. Following graduation, she will begin studies at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music.

ROSS ROSEN, a Burger King Scholar and National Merit Finalist with a substantial list of accomplishments in science and mathematics, has a flair for jazz performance that has earned him honorable mention recognition in the 2016 Miami Herald Silver Knight in Music competition. In 2014, he initiated the "Healing Harmonies" program at Baptist Hospital to bring the therapeutic powers of music to oncology patients. Ross, a four-year member of Student Council, three of them as class treasurer, has likewise demonstrated his talent for leadership through his involvement with BBYO. He will begin his freshman year at Washington University, St. Louis, in the fall.

KAYLA SPIGELMAN, named as the 2016 Miami Herald Silver Knight winner in science, has spent nearly 300 hours as a student volunteer in a University of Miami biology lab. Working alongside a professor of evolutionary biology, she has studied embryonic gene expression in the *Mnemiopsis leidyi* ctenophore, an aquatic invertebrate.

Kayla has likewise made her mark through an original philanthropic project: each year since 2010, she has gathered a group of friends and classmates on Halloween night to go out to “trick or treat” for canned goods. The donated goods have gone to Feeding South Florida and to the Kosher Food Bank, and over the years have provided over 21,000 meals to community residents. A Burger King Scholar, Kayla will continue her studies at the University of Virginia.

Palmetto soccer superstar MORGAN LANG, recipient of the Barry and Barbara Zimbler Scholarship, first strapped on a pair of cleats in kindergarten. She has served as goalie not only for the Panthers and on two club teams, but for the State of Florida team for four straight years. Morgan has displayed a similar drive in her academic career, participating in both mathematics and science competitions. Next year she will pursue both her interests in accounting, business, and economics and her athletic career as a Division I soccer player for American University.

The funding for the Zimblers’ Scholarship was a special gift to the Zimblers by their friends and former athletes. It is named for Palmetto’s standout wrestling coach, Barry Zimbler, also a guidance counselor and fanatic football coach for many years at Palmetto, and his lovely wife, Barbara, a gifted teacher at Palmetto Middle School for over 30 years. In just 11 years, from 1965 to 1976, Coach Zimbler’s wrestling teams racked up a phenomenal 129-18-3 winning record, including 5 District Championships, 4 GMAC Championships, 2 State Championships, and 3 undefeated seasons. He coached 15 individual state champions, 21 state place winners, Florida’s first “3-time state champ,” 7 All-Americans, one Olympian, and 23 wrestlers who competed at the college level. Barry Zimbler won multiple Florida Wrestling “Coach of the Year” awards and a National Wrestling Coach of the Year Award. In 2013, he was awarded the National Wrestling Hall of Fame’s “John & Helen Vaughn” Award for his contribution to the sport of wrestling. Perhaps most importantly, Coach Zimbler created true “Panther Pride” by teaching his athletes by personal example and inspiration how to win with class and lose with class. One of Coach’s own former Palmetto athletes and alumni, Jeff Cutler, was given the honor of presenting the Zimblers’ Scholarship to Ms. Lang.

Many alumni donations underwrote this year’s generous scholarship amounts. The Alumni Association would like to thank in particular contributors to the Scholarship Founders Fund: Karyn Cunningham; Pamela Garrison; Larry and Molly Harris; Nancy Lawther; Cindy Lerner; Abe Ng; Blair Retchin; Richard H. Reynolds; Walter and Terri Shikany; and Ron and Anita Shuffield. Our gratitude is extended as well to those whose contributions established the Zimblers’ Scholarship: Irwin and Susan Becker; Jeff Cutler; Andrew Dewitt; Richard and Karen Forster; Dr. Manuel and Paula Frankel; Edwin and R. Ginsburg; Norman and Diane Goldenberg; Irene Hollander; Eddyse Kessler; Stephen J. Lazarus M.D.; Larry and Boni Perl; Joel Rabin; Charles Ruffner; Anna Sheldon; Arthur

J. Sheldon; Max and Gail Spiegelman; Robert and Jacqueline Spielman; Dr. Richard Toister; Anita M. Vajda; David and Carla Werner; and G.W. Young.

Congratulations to our 2016 Scholarship Winners: Abigail Hason, Ross Rosen, and Kayla Spiegelman. Winner of the Barry and Barbara Zimble Miami Palmetto Senior High School Alumni Association Scholarship (for achievement in athletics) was Morgan Lang.

