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Contact: Charity Waldron
cwaldron@commonwealthgames.org

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF STATE GAMES ANNOUNCED 2017 ATHLETES OF THE YEAR

Grand Rapids, Mich., September, 15, 2017 – Officials with the National Congress of State Games (NCSG) announced the 2017 Athletes of the Year. A youth female, youth male, adult female and adult male athlete are chosen as Athlete of the Year. Athletes are nominated after winning Athlete of the Year at their local State Games. Thirty-One State Games organizations awarded Athletes of the Year in 2017 and submitted their nominations for the national award.

The 2017 Athletes are:

- Youth Female: Hailey Poole – Multi-sport – Worden, MT
- Adult Male: Dave Winslow – Bowling – Billings, MT
- Adult Female: Dorian McMenemy – Swimming – Northboro, MA
- Youth Male: Daylin Toms – Wrestling – Cool Ridge, WV

The 2017 recipients will be recognized at the NCSG Annual Symposium and TEAMS Conference and Expo on Tuesday, October 31, 2017 in Orlando, FL.

Hailey Poole (Youth Female AOY), 18, won the Big Sky State Games Female Youth Athlete of the Year. She has competed in Track & Field, Volleyball, and Swimming with her dominate sport being Track & Field. In 2017, she earned 11 Gold, 8 Silver and 2 Bronze medals in Track & Field. Hailey broke her own Big Sky State Games Javelin record in 2017 with a throw of 147'00". Poole ranked No. 2 in the nation for high school girls javelin last spring, having thrown 158 feet, 9 inches. Javelin is in her genes as her father and grandfather were both successful javelin throwers, her father was a three-time All American for the University of Texas. Hailey is the state javelin champion three times in Class B and threw for Colstrip for three years before moving to Huntley Project. She's currently holds Montana High School Association All-Class girls' javelin record. Poole signed on to throw the javelin for the University of Minnesota, sending the four-time Class B state javelin champion to Minneapolis to compete at the college level. She also was a recipient of the 2016 Big Sky State Games Character Counts Scholarship. Many of her family members both compete and volunteer in the Big Sky State Games.

Hailey stated, "I have a burning desire to be great. And that can be bad or good, depending on the situation," she continued with another laugh. "The pressure has helped me push myself. Not only in the offseason working out, but I want to be good at things in life."

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Dave Winslow (Adult Male AOY), 59, has been competing in State Games for 32 years, competing in the Big Sky State Games for 31 years. Since 2001, he has earned 12 Gold, 3 Silver and 6 Bronze medals in Bowling. Dave is a member of the city bowling hall of fame and in 2017 was inducted into the State of Montana Bowling Hall of Fame. Winslow an optician by trade, has (21) 300s and (6) 800s on his bowling resume. Two of those 300s came in 2011 in the same month. In a rare feat that is likely a first for Billings, Dave and his son Damon both rolled perfect games of 300 in the 2011 bowling season and also put together remarkable three-game series totaling 800 pins or better.

Dorian McMenemy (Adult Female AOY), 20, has been a long time participant in Bay State Games Swimming and Basketball events. She has won countless medals, primarily gold. As a high school swimmer, Dorian was a four time Massachusetts state champion, a National Interscholastic Swimming Coaches Association (NISCA) All-America Academic Selection and two-time USA Swimming Scholastic All-American (2013-2015). After high school, Dorian chose to attend Wagner College where in her first year she was a member of the medley relay team that set a new school and conference record. Dorian is a dual citizen of both the US and Dominican Republic; she has competed in both the 2012 London and 2016 Rio Olympic Games as a swimmer. On September 12, 2016, one month after competing in the Rio Olympics, Dorian suffered a stroke during college swim practice. After spending a week in the hospital, she spent months in recovery. She returned to Wagner for her second semester and while she could not compete with her swim team, she resumed practice and began working out again to regain her health. After months of hard work, she returned to the Bay State Games in the Summer of 2017 just 10 months after suffering her stroke and won three swimming gold medals.

Daylin Toms (Youth Male AOY), 16, wrestled at the Virginia Commonwealth Games, He received a gold medal in his weight class, but his path to the gold medal was anything but normal. In 2014 Daylin contracted Encephalitis that caused his brain to rupture not once but twice. This resulted in frontal lobe brain damage. He lost the ability to read, write, and his memory was come and go. He could not even remember his own name or the names of his siblings or parents. His family was told by doctors that he would never again be able to do the things he once was able to do. After a year without a seizure, but still experiencing emotional and behavior issues, he was cleared to wrestle again which was the sport he excelled at before the injury. He struggled trying to remember the moves for the sport that had been so second nature to him previously. He struggled but would not quit. In 2015 he did not qualify for the WVSSAC High School State Tournament but he had improved greatly by the Regional tournament. In 2016 Daylin qualified for the WVSSAC tournament and won two matches in the State tournament but he left empty handed but more determined than ever. At the 2017 Virginia Commonwealth Games Daylin weighed in at 166 pounds having lost more than 50 pounds since the injury. He wrestled in the 170 pound weight class and after a dominating performance in which he pinned every opponent he wrestled, he came home as the 2017 Virginia Commonwealth Games 170 Pound Champion and an inspiration for many.

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The NCSG has awarded Athletes of the Year since 1994.

Previous Athlete of the Year award winners include:

- **2016:** Youth: Male – Sabastian Harsh – Wrestling – Scottsbluff, NE, Female: Collette & Elyse Levens – Multi-sport – Lake Orion, MI. Adult: Male – Don “Boomer” McCrea – Multi-sport – Portland, OR, Female – Janet Brady – Track & Field – Canton, MI.
- **2015:** Youth: Danika Osman – Swimming - Missouri, Female: Andrea Weiss – Badminton – New Mexico, Male: Josh Majerus – Wrestling – Nebraska
- **2014:** Youth: Branden Ivey – Martial Arts – Mississippi, Female: Jennifer Buckner– Weight Lifting – New Mexico, Male: Elmer Hawse – Shooting – Missouri
- **2013:** Youth: Taileena Oja – Swimming – Missouri, Female: Jen Reiter – Multi- sport – Montana, Male: Bryan Brosious – Multi-Sport – Montana
- For complete list of previous winners please visit www.stategames.org/aoy

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About the National Congress of State Games: The National Congress of State Games (NCSG) is a membership organization comprised of 30 Summer State Games and 10 Winter State Games organizations and a member of the United States Olympic Committee's Multi Sport Organizational Council. The mission of the NCSG is to support State Games member organizations in the promotion of health, fitness and character building through Olympic-Style competitions and physical activities.

About the Big Sky State Games: The Big Sky State Games is located in Billings, Montana. The Big Sky State Games has grown since the inaugural year in 1986 when 3,376 athletes participated in 12 sports, to 10,000 athletes competing in 35 sports last year.

About the Bay State Games: The Bay State Games is located in Massachusetts and hosts both Summer and Winter Games. The Bay State Summer Games attract more than 7,000 athletes from the state of Massachusetts, who compete in 26 different sports. Bay State Games is organized by the Massachusetts Amateur Sports Foundation.

About the Virginia Commonwealth Games: The Virginia Commonwealth Games is located in Lynchburg, VA and on the campus of Liberty University. The VA Commonwealth Games is conducted by Virginia Amateur Sports VAS. Virginia Amateur Sports is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization with a mission to promote awareness and benefits of physical fitness and healthy lifestyles through sports education, training & competition. In the 2017 Games, there were over 10,000 participants in over 50 sports.