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NATIONAL CONGRESS OF STATE GAMES ANNOUNCES 2020 ATHLETES OF THE YEAR

Grand Rapids, Mich., October 6, 2020 – Officials with the National Congress of State Games (NCSG) announced the 2020 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. In 2020, 30 State Games organizations awarded Athletes of the Year and submitted their nominations for the national award.

The 2020 Athletes of the Year are:

- Adult Female: Ashlynn Moore– Track & Field – Roanoke, VA
- Adult Male: Kevan Hueftle – Track & Field – Eustis, NE
- Youth Female: Teagan Dymek – Volleyball – Osterville, MA
- Youth Male: Reese Stevenson –Swimming – Harvard, MA

The 2020 recipients will be recognized at the NCSG Virtual Annual Symposium and TEAMS Virtual Conference and Expo.

Ashlynn, 20, is no stranger to tackling challenges head on. Born with Spina Bifida, she has found her love of wheelchair sports, including basketball, baseball, and track and field events. She is continuously thrilled to participate in the Virginia Commonwealth Games and loves everything that comes along with competing. Ashlynn finds tremendous joy in participating in her various sports and wakes up every morning with a smile and a commitment to live life to the fullest. She always is pushing herself as an athlete, challenging her limitations, and refuses to settle.

Kevan Hueftle, 35, is a medal winning Paralympian for Team USA hailing from Nebraska. Kevan was a successful track and field athlete at the University of Nebraska when in 2005 he lost his left foot in a hunting accident. He attempted to return but was unsuccessful as his leg has not finished healing. Unfortunately, he fell into a depression and unhealthy habits, but decided to turn things around in 2015. In 2017, he returned to running and cutting down his times. In the 2020 Cornhusker State Games, Kevan comfortably won his age group in the 100- and 200-meter dashes. For Team USA, he has won gold in the 100 meter and silver in the 200 meter at the Parapan American Games. Kevan has an immense fire for competition and excellence regardless of his situation.

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Teagan Dymek, 17, exemplifies what it means to be a scholar-athlete. Not only has she excelled in the classroom, overcoming the obstacles of hearing loss and an auditory processing disorder, but she continues to be an outstanding athlete who sets her own bar for excellence very high. Teagan competes in volleyball, swimming, and rowing/crew. None of these sports are offered at her high school. Therefore, she has had to adjust her own schedules to accommodate for long drives to and from practices, as well as to and from competitions. Although physically very small in size, the size of this tiny competitor's heart continues to be evident in every sport in which she competes and throughout her life as she interacts not only with her peers, but also the community at large. Her smaller stature and competitive nature ignited a fire in Teagan to prove the coaches wrong who told her she was too short but putting in additional hours at the gym to be the best athlete she can be. Her determination is also mirrored in the classroom and community, as she has attained high honors and developed a program called "Greenwood Gives Back", which began as a food drive and has blossomed into a program in which eyewear is collected and distributed in Africa. Teagan is also a Bay State Games Ambassador at her School, Teagan worked with her peers and Athletic Director to not only promote the Bay State Games but to also initiate the formation of a volleyball team at her school.

Reese Stevenson, 17, has been swimming in Bay State Games since 2015, winning several medals along the way. He has been swimming competitively since he was 11 and also plays rugby for his school. He has not traveled the most natural path to find his success, but he has persevered. Reese chose to attend a boarding school that did not have a swim team rather than one that did because it was the right academic fit, but he found a way to make it work. He became a member of the Thoreau Sharks and trained at 5:00 AM at a community center with adults, most of whom were three times his age. On his team and during competition at the Bay State Games he has medaled, set records, won titles, and is consistently used as an example to younger swimmers. The last few summers Reese has joined swimmers from across Massachusetts as a member of Team New England and participated in the AAU Junior Olympic Games, where he has won 50 and the 100 free in back to back years. At the 2019 AAU Junior Olympics, Reese qualified for the 2019 USA Futures meet in both the 50 and 100 free. Out of the pool, Reese has been a Bay State Games High School Ambassador, been a member of the Kimball Union Academy Fire Brigade, a proctor in his dorm, assisting in theater, and was named Outstanding Male Citizen in the Junior Class. With all of this, he has placed on High Honor Roll and earned a sport on the D1 roster at Bryant University in the fall of 2020. Reese is a quiet, unassuming, dedicated, humble, and supportive teammate. He is a role model to younger swimmers who have watched him achieve his dreams through hard work and dedication.

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The NCSG has awarded Athletes of the Year since 1994.

Previous Athlete of the Year award winners include:

- **2019:** Youth: Male – Peter Thompson – Swimming – Billings, MT, Female: Aubriella Hairston – Ninja Challenge – Rainsville, AL. Adult: Male – Michael Gallardo – Track & Field – Los Angeles, CA, Female: Bonnie Coleman – Multi-Sport – Albuquerque, NM.
- **2018:** Youth: Male – Adin Fetibegovic – Taekwondo – Shelby Township, MI, Female: Maycee Peacher – Wrestling – Omaha, NE. Adult: Male – Chad Lorenz – Track & Field – Beloit, KS, Female – Sharon Harris – Multi-Sport – Billings, MT.
- **2017:** Youth: Male – Daylin Toms – Wrestling – Cool Ridge, WV, Female: Hailey Poole – Multi-sport – Worden, MT. Adult: Male – Dave Winslow – Bowling – Billings, MT, Female – Dorian McMenemy – Swimming – Northboro, MA.
- **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.
- 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 over 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 Virginia Commonwealth Games: Going into its 31st year, Commonwealth Games is open to all ages and skill levels. From archery to wrestling, this event offers sports competition venues for 55+ different Olympic and Pan American sports. More than 4,400 athletes competed in 29 sports in the first Games. More recently, in 2018, the Games hosted nearly 10,000 athletes competing in 54 individual and team sports, used over 80 sporting venues and worked with more than 1,200 volunteers. This multi-sport festival is supported by a grassroots volunteer network, businesses and governments of Central Virginia. The Games have an estimate \$2 million economic impact. More than 240,000 athletes, their families plus spectators have participated during the past 29 years. The success of the Games is immeasurable, in today's semantics - priceless.

About the Cornhusker State Games: The Cornhusker State Games is a statewide amateur sports festival for all Nebraskans. The purpose of the Games is to provide top-quality amateur competition in a wide range of activities. Besides offering a wide range of competitions (from traditional Olympic sports such as Track & Field, Gymnastic and Swimming), Nebraskans' competitive interests are served by less demanding events such as Horseshoe Pitching, Mallwalk and Chess.



About the Bay State Games: The Massachusetts Amateur Sports Foundation is a non-profit organization with the primary function of organizing the Bay State Summer and Winter Games. These programs attract more than 7,000 athletes from the State of Massachusetts, who compete in over 30 different sports. Summer Games begin with statewide tryouts in June and conclude with Sports competitions held in Eastern and Central Massachusetts throughout July. The Bay State Winter Games are annual held in the Berkshire Region of Massachusetts and attract athletes in figure skating, ice hockey, and curling. In addition to the Summer and Winter Games, the Bay State Games also organizes a number of enrichment programs including the Future Leaders Scholarship program, the Kristian Rose Memorial Scholarship, the Adopt an Athlete Program, the High School Ambassador Program, a Sports Medicine Symposium, Athlete of the Year Award, and the Bay State Games Hall of Fame.