



## **19<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL WENDY'S HIGH SCHOOL HEISMAN AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

*High School Seniors Recognized for Excellence in Athletics, Academics and Community Involvement*

**NEW YORK (Dec. 7, 2012)** – Zoe Alaniz of Corpus Christi, Texas, and Samuel Prakel of Versailles, Ohio, were proudly recognized this evening as the scholar-athletes to win the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Wendy's<sup>®</sup> High School Heisman<sup>®</sup> Award honoring high school seniors who excel in sports, academics and community involvement. These extraordinary students were chosen from more than 45,000 applicants.

The Wendy's High School Heisman Award, inspired by Wendy's founder Dave Thomas, honors the achievements of exceptional high school seniors and provides a platform for their continued growth and success. Since its inception in 1994, more than 415,000 students have been nominated for the Wendy's High School Heisman Award.

"The Wendy's High School Heisman honors student-athletes who embody the spirit of the Heisman tradition of hard work and dedication," said Archie Griffin, the only two-time winner of the Heisman Memorial Trophy and a long-time spokesman of Wendy's High School Heisman. "Congratulations to Zoe and Samuel, and all of our 2012 National Finalists. Their achievements in the classroom, the playing fields, and in their communities, are truly inspiring."

### **Zoe Alaniz, W. B. Ray High School Hometown: Corpus Christi, TX**

As the Valedictorian of her class for four consecutive years, Zoe Alaniz is a top scholar and committed to excelling academically. She was also named the National Hispanic Program Scholar her senior year. In addition to her academic achievements, Alaniz is a standout performer in swimming and diving and holds a school, district and state scoring record of 534.30 for 11 dives in the 1 meter event. She plans to swim at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign next year.

### **Samuel Prakel, Versailles High School Hometown: Versailles, OH**

Sam Prakel is a triple threat as an exceptional athlete with record breaking stats in cross country, track and field and swimming and diving. He holds the state meet record and all-division course record of 15:19.34 for the 5,000 meter distance in cross country and plans to run at a top university after graduation. Prakel is most proud of his leadership role in Boy Scouts, where he organized service projects and earned the Eagle Scout rank.

Alaniz and Prakel will each receive a crystal Wendy's High School Heisman trophy, a \$10,000 donation to his and her high school and a \$500 Wendy's gift card, along with an appearance on Saturday's live Heisman Trophy broadcast on ESPN<sup>®</sup> at 8 p.m., Eastern Standard Time.

"Our founder, Dave Thomas, created the Wendy's High School Heisman program to honor elite high school seniors who excel in the classroom, in athletic competition and give back to their communities. We congratulate Zoe and Sam, who are role models for their generation. We're highly confident they will carry on

the program's tradition of continued excellence," said Emil Brolick, President and Chief Executive Officer, Wendy's.

A panel of distinguished judges selected Alaniz and Prakel from 12 National Finalists – six senior males and six senior females – representing the six geographic Heisman Trophy regions. Wendy's honored the National Finalists at an awards ceremony in New York City this evening, which will air on ESPN2® at 1 p.m., Eastern Standard Time on December 16.

The other 10 Wendy's High School Heisman National Finalists are:

Name	Gender	High School	City	State
Tessa Brooks	F	Triway High School	Wooster	Ohio
Avalon Frantz	F	Boulder City High School	Boulder City	Nevada
Tyler Hoffman	M	Farmington High School	Farmington	Connecticut
Trent Hosick	M	Staley High School	Kansas City	Missouri
Daniel Johnson	M	Ridgeland High School	Rossville	Georgia
Kaitlyn Kent	F	South Iredell High School	Statesville	North Carolina
Tyler Meidell	M	Damonte Ranch High School	Reno	Nevada
Margaret Midkiff	F	Mount De Sales Academy	Macon	Georgia
Casey Pearsall	F	Wilton High School	Wilton	Connecticut
Jack Twomey-Kozak	M	Orange High School	Hillsborough	North Carolina

The initial rounds of judging were conducted by ACT, Inc., a leader in educational testing and services, which scored applicants and determined hundreds of School Winners, 1,020 State Finalists and 102 State Winners from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. After State Winners were selected, a distinguished panel of judges – from the worlds of education, business, and sports, along with former college Heisman Memorial Trophy Award winners and former national Wendy's High School Heisman winners – carefully reviewed all nomination forms and voted on the National Finalists and National Winners.

For more information about the 2012 Wendy's High School Heisman Award program, and to view photos and bios of the National Winners and National Finalists, as well as photos from the Heisman weekend, please visit [www.WendysHeisman.com](http://www.WendysHeisman.com). To download bios and photos on the winners, as well as the finalists, please visit <http://www.multivu.com/players/English/57930-wendys-high-school-heisman-award/>.

### **About the Wendy's High School Heisman Program**

Created in 1994 by Wendy's and the Heisman Memorial Trust, the Wendy's High School Heisman Award recognizes outstanding high-school seniors nationwide who excel in athletics, academics and in the community. Students can nominate themselves for the award online, in addition to being recommended by principals, teachers, guidance counselors and coaches. The most exceptional students are then selected to advance during extensive judging processes conducted at both state and national levels.

### **About The Wendy's Company**

The Wendy's Company is the world's third largest quick-service hamburger company. The Wendy's system includes more than 6,500 franchise and company restaurants in the U.S. and 27 countries and U.S. territories worldwide. For more information visit [www.wendys.com](http://www.wendys.com), or [www.aboutwendys.com](http://www.aboutwendys.com).

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