

Waconia High School is proud to announce that **Carson Dock** and **Sophia Osterberg**, juniors at WHS were selected as the school's **2018 ExCEL Award candidates**.

Sponsored by the Minnesota State High School League, ExCEL (Excellence in Community, Education and Leadership) is a unique recognition program designed exclusively for high school juniors. Students who are active in fine arts and athletic activities, who show leadership qualities, and who are model citizens are eligible for the award. To be eligible for the ExCEL Award, students must: be a junior in high school; make satisfactory progress toward graduation requirements; participate in a League-sponsored fine arts and/or athletic activity; hold a leadership position in their school; work voluntarily in their community; and meet MSHSL General Eligibility Requirements.



Carson Dock, son of Christine and Jayson Dock, has played a valuable role in the many Band and Choir Fine Art programs here at Waconia High School. He has participated in Band and Choir for three years and thus far has earned a varsity letter in both his freshman and sophomore years as well as Excellent and Superior awards in the Instrumental Solo Ensemble and Vocal Solo Ensemble Contests. He has been a part of the Marching Band for three years where he earned the role as a Rookie Advisor last year. Carson is also a three-year member of the Pep Band and Jazz 1 and Jazz 2 Bands accomplishing 1st chair and Soloist in Jazz 1. He has also been a three-year member of the Show Choir where he was a Varsity “Power Company” member and soloist for the last two years. He has also participated in the annual Show Choir Spectacular in Small Ensembles. Carson has also been a member of the Chamber Choir during his sophomore year and is currently a member as a junior.

Carson has also been active in Cross Country and Track, lettering his freshman and sophomore years as a member of the Cross Country team. He has achieved the Spotlight on Scholarship Gold Standard award three years in Cross Country and two years in Track.

Academically, Carson has been on the Waconia High School “A” honor roll with a 4.0 average from 9th through 11th grade earning three Academic Letters to date. Carson is a three-year member of the Student Council where he actively participated in the Blood Drive, Toy Drive, and as a Homecoming Committee Leader. He also participated on the Relay for Life and the Fairgrounds Cleanup Committees. Carson has also been involved in the American Mathematics Competition and the National Honors Society for two years and has led by example as a Peer Mentor for three years. In his “free time” Carson has put in many hours volunteering in these programs within the Waconia Community: America Reads, Feed My Starving Children, Carver County Fair Cleanup, Waconia Beach Cleanup, Adopt a Highway, and Westwood Community Church. Carson shared this insight in regards to volunteering with the America reads program where he meets with an elementary school student once a week before school starts, “It is amazing to know that by volunteering my time and energy, my student’s reading skills are improving dramatically each and every week.” Carson is a humble, remarkable person of high character.



Sophia Osterberg, daughter of James and Julie Osterberg, has been active in Volleyball, Basketball, and Golf. As a three-year participant in Volleyball she has received two Varsity letters and earned the position of setter on the Conference Championship Team her Junior year. Sophia also earned a Varsity letter in Basketball and has been a Spotlight on Scholarship award winner for the past three years in each sport she has been a participant.

Throughout Sophia’s high school career, she has maintained a “4.0” average while participating in a variety of school activities. Those activities include: National Honor Society, International Club, Students Against Destructive Decisions, Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Peer Mentors. Sophia has also represented her school with pride as the Waconia Wildcat Mascot and the Emcee for the Prom Grand March.

Sophia has also been very active in the Waconia Art Club where she has played a major part of two special programs. The first program is the “Memory Project”, in which she

drew portraits for children in third world country orphanages and the second program, “Artist Assistant”, matched her with an artist for a community wide art event.

Sophia is a “Shining Star” when it comes to building community through volunteerism and community service, logging an amazing 590 volunteer hours over the last three years. The volunteer activities she has been involved with include: Waconia School Ground Cleanup (one of the event founders and organizers), Good Samaritan Nursing Home (where she was recognized for commitment and positive relationships with the residents), Soles4Soles Community Shoe Drive, Miles of Smiles Glow Run (race coordinator for a 5K memorial run), Waconia Art Wander, Guatemala Mission Trip, Community Education Summer Basketball Camp, Waconia Basketball Association, Church Youth Group, Feed My Starving Children, Lake Waconia Half Marathon, and Elementary School Classroom Set-up. Sophia has shared this about the time she has spent developing relationships with the Good Samaritan residents: “Through their stories, I learned about overcoming challenges, always looking on the bright side of situations. The residents at Good Samaritan taught me how to be a better person and to take advantage of every opportunity.”

Well done Carson and Sophia!