

Lisa Nelson Memorial Scholarship-2025

Background

Good evening. My name is Paul Nelson, this is my daughter Whitney, my niece Hannah, and my sister Kristine. We are excited to acknowledge the recipients of the thirteenth annual Lisa Nelson Memorial Scholarship here on "Lisa Nelson Court". It gives us great pleasure to introduce the male and female recipients who will each receive a \$5000.00 college scholarship in honor and memory of Coach Nelson.

For those who are not familiar with Coach Nelson, she was a P.E. teacher and the head volleyball coach here at Ralston Valley from 2000-2013. She truly loved her position as an educator and a coach and she genuinely and deeply cared for her students, her athletes, and her colleagues. Tragically on March 3, 2013, she passed away after a courageous battle with cervical cancer. She was 43. She never let

cancer compromise her way. She battled cancer with dignity, strength and courage. She touched many lives here at RV during her 13-year tenure as a teacher and a coach.

To commemorate her life and to ensure that she continues to influence the lives of Ralston Valley student athletes the Lisa Nelson Memorial Scholarship was established. Since its inception in 2013, Ralston Valley students, faculty and staff in conjunction with the surrounding community and many generous sponsors have contributed to ensure the stability and longevity of the fund.

So many people have helped the fund grow by participating in our annual fundraising events. I want to extend a special thank you to Mrs. Braketa and to the members of Student Government who annually organize and run the "Lisa Nelson Mustang Stampede" a 5K that directly benefits the scholarship fund. I also

want to thank all students, parents, teachers and staff members who participated in last fall's 5K.

Together we have created a scholarship we can be proud of. Together we are fulfilling the mission of the scholarship board, which reads...**We want to remember and honor Lisa's legacy and Pay It Forward...** through college scholarships for Ralston Valley High School Student Athletes.

Selecting two recipients is not an easy task, there are some amazing student athletes in this building. Narrowing it down was very difficult due to the quality of the applications. Thank you to all of those that applied and to the teachers and staff that assisted them.

Both of tonight's recipients possess qualities respected by Coach Nelson. They are tremendous students, have experienced athletic achievement and have demonstrated leadership, good moral

character, citizenship, sportsmanship and community involvement.

Hi my name is Whitney Nelson and I am proud to present this year's female recipient.

Mallory Chavez

Academics

Our female recipient will be attending Indiana State University in the fall where she will major in Psychology & Social Services and play softball. She is a National Honor Society and a National Spanish Honor Society member carrying a 4.19 weighted GPA. She is described by one of her teachers as a student with first rate analytical abilities, an enthusiastic attitude, and a solid work ethic. She is a four-time Academic Letter recipient.

Athletics

Athletically our female recipient has been a member of the varsity softball team since her freshman year. She is a four-time First Team All-Conference and Honorable Mention All-State recipient. In her essay to the scholarship board, she explains what she has learned through athletics. She writes "I have competed in softball since I was a child and believe that participation in athletics results in creating confidence, understanding hard work and being a role model. Our female recipient has been described as a leader to those around her. This is something she has strived to become, she writes, "During my time in high school, I have made it my obligation to be an empowering leader on and off the field to my teammates".

Community

Our female recipient has been very active in community service. She has helped set up and run RVHS events like Trick or Treat Street and Trivia Night. She has volunteered as an Outdoor Lab Leader. She has participated in Adaptive Athletics Softball Day, and she has donated time to the Salvation Army and Packs of Hope organizations. Through the Spanish Honor Society, she has volunteered to help students whose first language is Spanish by being a translator and providing peer tutoring. She has also exemplified Spanish culture throughout RV by decorating display cases highlighting historical Spanish people and Spanish holidays. She explains, through her experiences she has cultivated a desire to give back to community and to contribute to the well-being of others.

In a letter of recommendation to the scholarship board, Mrs. Martin her Chemistry teacher

testifies to the type of person she is. She writes, "What sets her apart from her peers is not just her brilliant mind and strong work ethic, but her strong moral character".

For outstanding academic achievement, for being a tremendous athlete and leader, and for selfless service to the community, I am proud to introduce Mallory Chavez as the female recipient of the Lisa Nelson Memorial Scholarship.

Grant Belcher

Academics

Our male recipient will be attending Regis University in the fall and playing baseball. He is a member of the National Honor Society carrying a 4.14 weighted GPA. He is a four-time Academic Letter recipient and has received Academic All-State 1st team honors his junior and senior year. He is a tremendous student who attributes his success in the classroom to time management,

seeking help from teachers and peers and taking the time to fill your mental, physical and emotional bucket.

Athletics

Athletically our male recipient is a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and a four-year varsity letter winner in baseball. He has received 2nd team all-conference honors as a junior. Coach Madden states that he could potentially receive 1st team all-conference honors this season because he had such a great year. As a senior he was viewed as a team leader one who exemplified resiliency, focus, grit passion and a positive mindset. In speaking to others about this young man, I learned that he is the type of athlete that has consistently put in the extra time and effort to get better. I heard several stories about him on the field at all hours of the day working to improve his game. This is a testimony to the type of person he is. In his essay to the scholarship board, he talks about the impact being a student

athlete has made on him. He writes "It has reinforced the importance of balancing a strong work-ethic with healthy physical, and mental lifestyle choices. It has taught me the importance of teammates and friendship". He goes on to say, "I have learned to embrace my gifts and talents and to trust the process of growing in areas that are challenging while encouraging others to do the same".

Community

Our male recipient has been very active in community service. Throughout high school he has volunteered at a Christian nonprofit called the Denver Dream Center who rescue people, rebuild lives and restore dreams. Their mission is to transform lives, one person at a time! He also volunteers for Kitchen One-for-One a Christian nonprofit food truck who uses really good food to connect with people one taco at a time.

For academic achievement, for being a tremendous athlete and leader, and for selfless service to the community, I am proud to introduce Grant Belcher as the male recipient of the Lisa Nelson Memorial Scholarship.