

Sweet Jane's Wish Foundation Awards Scholarships to Downingtown East and West Ice Hockey Players

Downingtown— May 2nd — Sweet Jane's Wish (SJW) Foundation is happy to announce Seniors, Nick Geanopulos, of Downingtown West and, Joseph Butler of Downingtown East have been selected as the winners of the annual SJW scholarship fund. Four students are selected each school year from the tennis and ice hockey teams by the SJW Foundation. Nick and Joe join our Fall scholarship recipients, Isabel Schreffler and Elizabeth Blok. SJW Foundation is a fund of the Chester County Community Foundation and honors the memory of Jane Gerlach Booge who tragically lost her battle with breast cancer at age 47. Jane attended Downingtown High School and was a member of the tennis team. Her quiet confidence and positive attitude took her to numerous championship matches including districts and state competitions. Jane was well known for her compassion and friendship to many.

SJW Foundation honors students such as Nick and Joe, who share Jane's qualities of determination, resilience, camaraderie and have a love of tennis or ice hockey. Nick and Joe demonstrate these qualities by consistent dedication to their sport and team members.

During his Junior year, Nick Geanopulos suffered an unfortunate injury while playing ice hockey. Nick was hit during a game and collided with the boards, tearing his ACL. Imagine the heartache and frustration after years of practice to where your team is like family and motion is a way of life and suddenly not being able to walk. The first few weeks were tough, especially going back to school and walking on crutches, but each step made him stronger. Slowly he regained his strength through physical therapy and doing additional exercises, always with his eye on the prize, returning to the ice for his Senior year. Nick said coming back from his injury "benefited him more than hurt him." It taught him he can handle adversity and that things do improve over time if you put in the hard work. In the coaches own words, "Nick fought hard to come back for his Senior year." His positive and humble attitude made him a great asset to the team.

Joe Butler is a seasoned veteran of the ice, having played ice hockey since he was three years old. He played on several teams through the years and has been an ice hockey official for the last five years. In his various roles he has learned the importance of teamwork, leadership, communication and how to make a fair and quick decision. As every athlete knows, playing a varsity sport requires a great deal of time and dedication while going to school. Joe attends the Downingtown STEM Academy which is known for its challenging course work. His studies were rigorous but have prepared him well for college and for his future endeavors. He is a well-rounded individual who works hard on and off the ice and has a bright future ahead of him.

Nick and Joe are talented ice hockey players who are passionate about the game. It's clear that the game is just a part of what they have learned along the way. Both boys are considerate of their teammates, respectful of the officials, and well-liked by their coaches. They've learned to work hard and never give up even when the struggle seemed insurmountable. These lessons have developed skills and character which will serve them well throughout their lives.

We are honored to have Nick and Joe join the previous forty recipients of this \$5,000 award. To date SJW Foundation has awarded \$135,000 in scholarships to Downingtown East and West High School Seniors who have participated in the student tennis and ice hockey programs and are furthering their education at a University, College, or Trade School.

Due to the success of the annual golf outing and the amazing generosity of supporters, the SJW Foundation is also able to support the Living Beyond Breast Cancer (LBBC) organization and the Chester County Hospital Foundation, SHiNE with a yearly donation. The SJW Foundation has donated more than \$31,000 to support local families experiencing financial crisis, due to the additional costs incurred while fighting breast cancer.

SJW Foundation scholarships are funded by an annual golf outing, dinner, and auction and by generous donations from our community. Please join us on Monday, September 9, 2024, for our 13th annual golf outing. The outing will be held at the Downingtown Country Club, in Downingtown, PA. Please look online for more information at www.sweetjaneswish.com and follow us on Facebook. We hope you join us for a wonderful day that supports our community!

For more information, press only:

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For more information on the Sweet Jane's Wish Foundation:

www.sweetjaneswish.com and follow us on Facebook.

Downingtown West Picture from left:

Coach, John Hyland, scholarship recipient, Nick Geanopulos, Coach, Brett Mackell



Downingtown East Picture from left:

Assistant Coach, Tom Engle, scholarship recipient, Joe Butler

