

The Crystal Lake Strikers Drumline  
Crystal Lake, Illinois

February 23, 2020

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CRYSTAL LAKE, IL – The Crystal Lake Strikers today announces the recipients of scholarships presented to members of the Strikers student ensembles. These ensembles include over 90 students from area schools. In 11 years of awarding scholarships, the Strikers have provided over \$50,000 in support to young men and women continuing their education.

The fifth annual William Laskey memorial scholarship recipient is Mikey Speziale, from Prairie Ridge High School in Crystal Lake. The scholarship is given in honor of Mr. Laskey, the longtime band director at Crystal Lake Community (Central) High School and director of the award-winning Heraldry Guard marching band. Mr. Laskey's former students felt a scholarship for a local music student was the ideal way to recognize his great work.

Emma Cross from Huntley High School was awarded the 11th annual Timothy Althoff Memorial scholarship. The Strikers Drumline created the scholarship in honor of Mr. Althoff, the late husband of State Senator Pamela Althoff. He had a life-long love of drumming and his community. Given his wide involvement and many contributions to the area, the Strikers named this scholarship in his honor.

Seven students were presented the third annual Strikers Founders' scholarships presented in honor of the organization's founders, Brett Hopkins, Tom Kundmann, and Aaron Shepley. They include Mia Chahmirzadi from Batavia, Brittany James and Brendan Schoneberg of Huntley, Kris Sanchez and Linnea Sardina from Lake Park High School in Roselle, Ana Munoz from Crystal Lake South and Nathan Melchert from Prairie Ridge High School.

Mr. Speziale is a three-year member of the Strikers All-Stars drumline, a mentor for the Strikers' Kingpins special needs program, and participates in the Strikers adult group that performs in the summer. He will be studying Music Education college. "Music will always be in my ears to distract me from the complexity and anxieties of life and I can't thank my Strikers family enough for giving me the gift that I can't wait to give to the world," he said.

Ms. Cross has been a member of the Crystal Lake Thunder competitive drumline for two seasons and has served as a mentor for Girls on the Drum. About music's impact on her life, Emma said, "Music has changed my life in immeasurable ways. I am eternally grateful for the values it has instilled in me and the memories I have made from it."

The scholarships were announced at the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Evening of Percussion on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Evening of Percussion features all five of the Strikers student performing ensembles and other entertaining acts.

The Crystal Lake Strikers is a performing arts organization that provides a performance outlet for adult drummers and education for local students. The Garage Store, Home State Bank, Althoff Industries, the Foglia Family Foundation, Phoenix Woodworking and Ormsby Motors are corporate sponsors. To learn more about the Strikers, visit [www.clstrickers.com](http://www.clstrickers.com).

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