

STAR STUDENT BANQUET HONORS ACT ACHIEVERS AND THEIR TEACHERS, PARENTS



Above: Gold Star Student Thomas Long and Gold Star Teacher Bobby Rawson. (Photo by Ron Barry)

By Ron Barry

According to the American College Testing organization, making a 28 composite score on the ACT places you in the top ten percent of all students who take the test.

Since 2001, Crockett County High School has been honoring the seniors who score 28 or better on the ACT with the Star Student Banquet, a luncheon that allows the achieving student to bring the teacher or staff member that has been the biggest influence in their academic career.

The 2023-24 version was held Wednesday morning at THE SPOT, hosted by CCHS Principal Jerrod Shelton and founding teacher Bobby Rawson – who saw the event come full circle for him as Thomas Long, this year's Gold Star Student (the highest ACT score in the senior class), selected Rawson as his most influential instructor.

Eleven Crockett seniors achieved the 28 or better score to earn the Star Student designation: Long, Casey Thornton, Addison Work, Olivia Gardner, Kloie Kail, Samuel Hatcher, Joy Evans, Baker Jones, Jacob Essary, Skyler Smothers, and Jayden Maddox.



Above: This group of Star Students & Teachers includes (from left, Student/Teacher): Baker Jones and Billy Allison; Jayden Maddox and Debra Hurst; Skyler Smothers and Leah Foust; and Jacob Essary and Leslie Essary. (Photo by Ron Barry)

The Star Teachers honored were Rawson (Long), Julie Nass (Thornton), Haley Williams (Work), Deborah Puckett (Gardner), Tarah Kail (Kail), Beth Crider (Hatcher), Sandy Woodruff (Evans), Billy Allison (Jones), Leslie Essary (Essary), Leah Foust (Smothers), and Debra Hurst (Maddox). Kail and Essary added to the sweetness of the occasion by naming their mothers as their most influential teachers.

The Star Student program echoes the words of Booker T. Washington: "Success is not measured by the position one has reached in life, rather by the obstacles overcome while trying to succeed." Honorees also heard a brief motivational talk from Crockett County Director of Schools Phillip A. Pratt, who encouraged them to ground themselves in a solid values system, give the most supreme effort possible in all their endeavors, and develop or maintain the desire to be a life-long learner.

All of the honorees were able to attend the luncheon except for Evans, who was competing at the TSSAA State Pentathlon Championship, and Nass, who was also there as her track and field coach. Evans finished in ninth place overall, a rise of three positions from her junior year finish in the competition.



Above: Addison Work and Haley Williams. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Sandy Woodruff and Casey Thornton -- exchanging partners with Julie Nass and Joy Evans, who were in Murfreesboro Wednesday. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: This group of Star Students & Teachers includes (from left): Teacher/Student Deborah Puckett and Olivia Gardner, and Beth Crider and Samuel Hatcher; Joy Evans' Star Teacher Sandy Woodruff; and Student/Teacher Kloie Kail and Tarah Kail (Kloie has Joy Evans' picture on her phone). (Photo by Ron Barry)

Below: This group of Star Students & Teachers includes (from left, Student/Teacher): Addison Work and Haley Williams; Casey Thornton (Teacher Julie Nass was coaching Joy Evans at the TSSAA State Pentathlon Championship); and Thomas Long and Bobby Rawson. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Billy Allison and Baker Jones. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Debra Hurst and Jayden Maddox. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Jacob Essary and Leslie Essary. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Kloie Kail and Tarah Kail. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Olivia Gardner and Deborah Puckett. (Photo by Ron Barry)



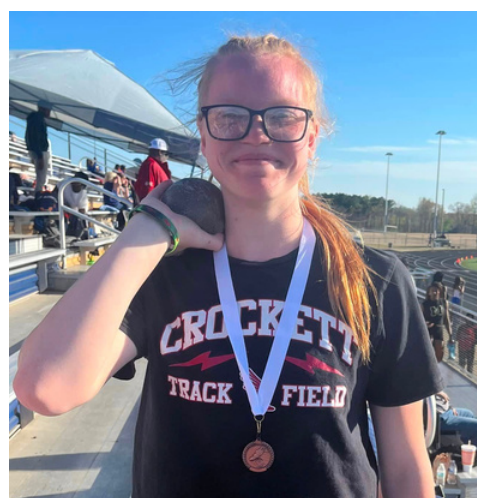
Above: Samuel Hatcher and Beth Crider. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Leah Foust and Skyler Smothers. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Julie Nass is the Star Teacher selection for Casey Thornton, but was at the Pentathlon Championship coaching Joy Evans Wednesday. (Photo by Ron Barry)



Above: Joy Evans is a Star Student, but was competing in the TSSAA State Pentathlon Championship Wednesday. She finished ninth in the 100-meter hurdles, ninth in the long jump, eighth in the high jump, third in the shot put, and ninth in the 800-meter run to finish ninth overall, three spots better than she performed as a junior. Sandy Woodruff is her Star Teacher selection. (Photo by Julie Nass)