

Challenge Program honoree excels in, out of classroom



THE CHALLENGE PROGRAM

Kayla Washko

Nick Reighard, a second-year student at Penn State Altoona, has been highly successful during his college career.

Last spring, Reighard was the recipient of the President's Freshmen Award, given to freshmen who maintain a 4.0 GPA during their first two semesters of study.

He also was inducted into Alpha Lambda Delta, a freshmen honor society that is nationally recognized.

He is a member of the dance marathon planning committee, which collects money for the Four Diamonds Fund at Hershey Medical Center. Money collected by the Four Diamonds Fund benefits child cancer patients.

But Reighard's academic success and active involvement in the community come as no shock to those who know him.

Reighard always has been a motivated and driven person who is focused on both personal and social progress.

As a high-school student at Conemaugh Valley, Reighard was class valedictorian

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**NICK REIGHARD,
PENN STATE ALTOONA
STUDENT AND CONEMAUGH
VALLEY GRADUATE**

and president of the National Honor Society. He excelled in rigorous academic classes such as rhetoric English, calculus and chemistry II, all of which are designed to prepare high-school students for the more difficult course work that college brings.

Outside of the classroom, Reighard volunteered his time at fundraisers and dinners held at his church and at a local fire

hall. As president of the National Honor Society during his senior year, he organized a cleanup that took place along the road heading to Hinckston Run Dam in East Taylor Township.

"My family's always been involved (in the community)," Reighard said.

"I guess I just took after them and saw that they enjoyed it. You know that in the end, your involvement helps to better serve the community."

Reighard is a three-time Challenge Program award recipient, winning for Most Community Service in both his junior and senior year, as well as for Best G.P.A. during his senior year.

He also was selected by his high school administrators to attend Johnstown's annual Showcase for Commerce event in both 2004 and 2005.

Since 2004, The Challenge Program has partnered with the Chamber of Commerce for this event, allowing high-school students to network with local business representatives and to educate themselves

about the growing job opportunities available to them in the Johnstown area.

"The Challenge Program has taught me that there are plenty of opportunities out there, as long as you are willing to take that first step," Reighard said. "The hardest part of anything is getting started."

Reighard is a 2006 graduate of Conemaugh Valley High School and plans to major in math at Penn State Altoona, with hopes of becoming an actuary.

This article is part of a human interest series that will feature past recipients of The Challenge Program's four award categories: Most Improved, Best G.P.A., Most Community Service and Best Attendance. The Challenge Program is a nonprofit organization located in Johnstown that provides financial incentives to students for successes they achieve while still in high school. The Challenge Program also aims to provide a bridge between high-school students and the local business community.

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