

## Saint James Catholic School: Msgr. Paul V. Heller, Sister Helen Maureen, IHM Award Winners



Student achievements are recognized at each graduation. Yet one award stands apart: the Msgr. Paul Heller and Sister Helen Maureen, IHM award. Formerly known as the Father Mullarkey, Sister Calista Award, this honor is presented to the boy and girl who exemplify success from the classroom to the sporting arena and beyond. This year's recipients are David Coon and Jacqueline (Jackie) Powers.

David and Jackie are both excellent students, with membership in the National Junior Honor Society. Jackie remembers, "I was so surprised when they called my name. It was such an honor."

The oldest of two daughters (sister, Reese, is a rising 6<sup>th</sup> grader), Jackie had been a Rocket since Kindergarten. Active in CYO sports (track and volleyball), the Spanish Club and Girl Scouts, Jackie professed an affinity for all subjects, but two stood out for her. "I really liked Social Studies and Math. I got to learn so much about our country as well as others. Mr. Bracken really prepared me for high school." Math held the fascination of the unknown: "there's so much to learn, it's all new."

Jackie particularly enjoys Scouting and performing community service. "I really like being together as a group and community service is fun; it's good to help people." It is our "community which makes [Saint James] so special. You have friends in all different grades. The teachers are all nice and teach really well." Some of her favorite memories are of field trips, especially one to Gettysburg.

Though she admits to being nervous about starting at Marshall in the fall, she's excited to meet new faces. Summer for Jackie will mean a family vacation, but also a bit of work: volleyball camps and perhaps some summer reading and research for her honors courses. Jackie plays for two local volleyball teams and hopes to make Marshall's team this fall. She would like to continue with Scouting, perhaps attaining the Gold Award, which is the highest level in Girl Scouts. "I really like my troop, I hope we can stay together."

David followed siblings Harrison and Caroline to St. James. Like Jackie, David is an avid sportsman, having played CYO and AAU basketball for years. His AAU team has participated in regional and national tournaments. He has also been an altar server. He hopes to play basketball at Bishop O'Connell (where Mom, Sara, works in the counseling office) and has already started work-outs for freshman football.

"I really liked Math; Mrs. Soliven taught it so well; but I also really liked Religion. Mr. Bracken gave us a good view of what it means to be Catholic." David went on to say that by personalizing a faith life he feels he has a good foundation to see him through high school and beyond.

It is his friends which he treasures and experiences such as Prayer Partners. "Especially in Kindergarten, it was cool to be with the older students. They were so big and you got to know them and be friends. Then as an 8<sup>th</sup> grader it was your turn to do the same for younger ones!"

David and Jackie agree that at St. James "you feel a part of something." For David, "It's been fun seeing everyone grow from kindergarten to eighth. You get a good education [in] life and academics. We were taught good Catholic values which helps us become disciples of God. It's really a great experience."

This theme of faith and service is evident with both students. Jackie talks of entering the medical field to help others. David thinks of a life of public service in the government.

"I'm going to miss St. James; I'm so used to getting out of the car in Lot B," says David. However, and almost at once, Jackie and David agreed "we'll always have the parish and the community to come back to." That is for certain. For more than a century, St. James has been family to generations. We're proud of Jackie and David and happy they've joined the long red line of Rocket alumni!