

Spalding an apropos host for Distinctive Scholars Convocation

SEVERN – With Steven Shin, Jenna Snead and Kellen Zemanski, Archbishop Spalding High School was a fitting host April 9 for the Archdiocese of Baltimore's annual Distinctive Scholars Convocation.

The event honors the top three students from 19 Catholic high schools.

Steven Shin is captain of the Spalding track and field team, a One Love student moderator and a tutor. A resident of Severna Park, he is president of the National Art Honor Society, and plans to study either biology or pre-medicine at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., or Dartmouth College in Hanover, N.H.

In a school with multiple academic tracks, Shin said, it was nice to have Catholicism as a central thread. He especially enjoyed religion classes, as there was always a good mix of students coming together.

Kellen Zemanski came to Spalding from St. John the Evangelist School in Severna Park. A member of the soccer and track teams, National Honor Society and Sustainability Club, Zemanski is another One Love moderator, as well as senior mentor for freshmen, a tutor and a math competition participant.

"I feel like the school's been really supportive of helping people to get where they want," said Zemanski, an Annapolis resident. "It's given me a lot of opportunities that I wouldn't have had otherwise."

Next year, he plans to attend either Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, the University of Pittsburgh, or Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, to study neuroscience, biology or philosophy.

Class president Jenna Snead, from Pasadena, plans to study engineering at either the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Rice University in Houston, or the University of Virginia in Charlottesville next year.

She plays soccer and track, is in Hiking Club, mock trial and the Haiti Club, which assists Spalding's sister school, Good Samaritans, in St. Marc. It coordinates homerooms sponsorships of Haitian students, and recruits volunteers for its mission trips. While some recent trips were cancelled due to unrest, Snead volunteered in St. Marci in the summer of 2017.

She enjoyed working on large service projects and coming together as a school community.

"I think it's amazing how we contribute to the community by all giving a little bit," Snead said, adding that the school went beyond instilling in its students Catholic teachings. "They also encourage you to live as a Catholic and be a part of the Catholic community."

Snead provided the call to worship at the April 9 event.

"Our gifts, as well as the gifts of all, come from God," Snead said to the crowd, adding that they need to remember to put them to good use.

A vesper service was led by Auxiliary Bishop Mark E. Brennan. In his reflection, Bishop Brennan noted the program, which included a brief biography of each student and a quote on their experience attending a Catholic school. Many referenced dedicated teachers.

"It's good that you understand that you have been blessed with a supportive environment in which you excel in your studies, and hone your other skills," he said. "You seem to recognize that you could not have done what you have done without the help that others have given you."

"Let God teach you how to use your spiritual gifts that you may live with integrity and witness to his goodness in the world."

Dr. Donna Hargens, archdiocesan superintendent of Catholic schools, congratulated the distinctive scholars.

"You truly stand out from the crowd because you are in the process of becoming who Christ intends for you to be. You are joyfully putting your faith into action," she said.

"We challenge you to continue to use your God-given talents to make this world a better place.

"The world needs you – trust in the plan that God has for you."

2019 Distinctive Scholars of the Archdiocese of Baltimore

Archbishop Curley High School, Baltimore: Anthony Dragisics, Kyrian Elekwachi, Tobi Majekodunmi

Archbishop Spalding High School, Severn: Steven Shin, Jenna Snead, Kellen Zemanski

Bishop Walsh School, Cumberland: Bella Biancone, Rose Duncan, Timothy Nield

Calvert Hall College High School, Towson: Rishibrata Biswas, Grant Duemmel, Andrew Sontag

The Catholic High School of Baltimore: Christina Giska, Bayley Lindsay, Brooke Mosca

Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Baltimore: Imani Kirk, Xarien Lyday, Brayan Perez

St. Frances Academy, Baltimore: Jo-Nai Duncan, Savawn Hughes, Jake Larson

Institute of Notre Dame, Baltimore: Emma Kalinski, Maura McCarthy, Alexis Poindexter

The John Carroll School, Bel Air: Pierce Berger, Caroline Smith, Bryan Stancliff

St. John's Catholic Prep, Buckeystown: Julie Brisbane, Victoria Geitner, Emily German

Loyola Blakefield: Luke Briggs, Graham Lindner, Luke Staczek

St. Maria Goretti High School, Hagerstown: Jacob Kornilow, Elizabeth

Patterson, Fizah Yousuf

St. Mary's High School, Annapolis: Mary Byrne, Aidan Doud, Rylei Smih

Maryvale Preparatory School, Lutherville: Theresia Keppel, Isabel Pineo, Kaelyn Richardson

Mercy High School, Baltimore: Sarah Coffman, Kayleigh Maimone, Esther Shin

Mount de Sales Academy, Catonsville: Theresa Balick, Sophie Palmer, Colleen Roche

Mount St. Joseph High School, Baltimore: Martin Blurton-Jones, Michael Garvin, Pierson Polcaro

Notre Dame Preparatory School, Towson: Katherine Norden, Grace Oakley, Alyssa Ritchie

Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, Essex: Ashley Conway, Austin Heid, Katherine Kovalick