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Ten students backed by Saratoga Sponsor-A-Scholar

SARATOGA SPRINGS — Saratoga Sponsor-A-Scholar (SSAS), a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to help financially eligible students complete high school and graduate from college, introduced the 10 students and one alternate who will be enrolled in the program at Saratoga Springs High School in the fall of 2008. The students were introduced to sponsors, donors and board members of the SSAS Program at an event at the Saratoga Springs High School last Tuesday.

Also on hand to celebrate with the scholars and their parents were Superintendent of Saratoga Springs School District Janice White; Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education Mike Piccirilli; and Director of the high school guidance department Kathy Kennedy.

The Saratoga Springs-based program is modeled on Capital Region Sponsor-A-Scholar, a successful organization founded in 1996 that serves students in Albany, Schenectady and Troy. SSAS provides the young scholars enrolled in the program with mentors, academic tutoring, help with college preparation and financial assistance during college.

With the help of Capital Region Sponsor-A-Scholar, the Saratoga Springs City School District (SSCSD), Skidmore College, the Saratoga Mentoring Program/Big Brothers Big Sisters and a group of committed community leaders began working to launch the program several months ago. The SSAS start-up committee includes Piccirillo, Kennedy, Lew and Pat Titterton, Jim LaVigne and Mary Gavin, Director of the Saratoga Mentoring Program of Catholic Charities Stephanie Wolos and Kate Dudley-Perry, academic counselor, HEOP/AOP, Skidmore College.

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Students are nominated by high school guidance counselors and complete a rigorous application process that includes a personal questionnaire and an interview. For a sponsorship of \$10,000, \$4,000 goes to support the in-school program during the scholar's high school years. After graduation, each student is guaranteed \$1,500.00 per year for each year of college he or she completes. A sponsor can be an individual, group or organization.

SSAS is seeking sponsors, donors, mentors and volunteers from the community. If you are interested in working with

SSAS, call 581-0979 or e-mail SSAS at saratogasponsorascholar@yahoo.com.



Photo Citation, left to right - First row: Natalia Allyn, Stephanie Charbonneau, Mayra Falcon, Kaylee Yager, and Alyssa Morrow.
Back row: Dylon Wilson, Jaime Perez, Conor Ahern (alternate), Shawn Coonradt and Jordan Wilsey.

Not pictured is Amanda Blake.

