

LOCAL

SECTION B MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2010

A STATE APPELLATE COURT upholds a crucial search warrant in a burglary case against a Schenectady man who allegedly traded drugs for stolen goods. B7

THE DAILY GAZETTE

SARATOGA SPRINGS

Sponsored high school scholars college-bound

Program guides first group through high school, to college

BY LEE COLEMAN
Gazette Reporter

The first nine students selected for the Saratoga Sponsor A Scholar program three years ago at Saratoga Springs High School are now seniors and applying to colleges.

The non-profit organization was created by a group of local people and businesses to help academically motivated but economically disadvantaged students graduate

from high school and succeed in college.

"Helping young scholars reach their goals," is the program's motto.

One of the nine scholars,

Batista
Gabri-elle "Gabi" Batista of Saratoga Springs, has already been accepted at St. Lawrence



University in Canton. She has also been awarded a \$30,000 per year scholarship at that university.

Batista and six other scholars will make a presentation at Tuesday's Board of Education meeting at 7:30 p.m. in the high school's teaching auditorium.

Batista was a sophomore at Saratoga Springs High School when she and the other eight students were selected for the brand new pro-

gram, modeled after the Capital Region Sponsor A Scholar programs in Schenectady, Albany and Troy.

"This year was pretty important," Batista said.

She said the program's academic coordinator, high school guidance counselor Brandy Cray, had Batista and the others writing college essays and filling out college applications.

"Mine was done by mid-October," Batista said. She was accepted at St. Lawrence as an "early decision" student.

She loves music and acting (she's a member of the high school Choir-liers and the Drama Club) but is also interested in physics. She said she plans to "explore" these subjects in college.

Saratoga Sponsor A Scholar provides the selected students with academic support, financial assistance and enrichment activities during high school and in college.

"Many of the students have mentors," said Patricia Titterton, who is

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on the organization's board of directors along with her husband, Lew Titterton of Saratoga Springs.

Pat Titterton said the mentors, who are volunteers from the community, provide a role model for the student and help them with their course work and with such tasks as applying to college. The mentors must be college graduates themselves and are screened and interviewed by the Sponsor A Scholar board.

Batista said one of the most helpful parts of the program are the weekly after-school homework sessions held every Monday in the

high school library. She said tutors are available to help students with math and science and other subjects during the hour-long sessions.

The Saratoga scholar program is currently helping 29 students, including sophomores and juniors.

Thirteen of the 29 students made the latest high school honor roll or high honor roll, Titterton said. "Six others came close," Titterton said. "Our goal is to have 50 percent or more make the honor roll."

The program, which raised \$140,000 in 2008 through donations by 12 local people and businesses,

provides \$10,000 in financial assistance to each student. Some \$4,000 of this assistance helps the student during high school and for each

year of college the student completes, the program gives them \$1,500. The senior scholars have applied to Skidmore College, College of St. Rose, Emerson College, New York University, University at Albany, Adirondack Community College and Hudson Valley Community College.

This past May, Saratoga Sponsor A Scholar raised \$40,000 at its main fundraiser called Bowling for Scholars at the Strike Zone bowling lanes in Saratoga Springs. Another bowling fundraiser will be held this coming May.

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