

Columbus Academy students credit school for PSAT scores

By PAMELA WILLIS

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Columbus Academy's National Achievement Semifinalists and Outstanding Participants are looking ahead to college and careers in medicine, film, psychology and law.

Seniors Zalika Corbett from Columbus, Lindsay Hughes of Dublin, and Ryan Wheeler of Blacklick, were named National Achievement semifinalists in the 2010 National Achievement Scholarship Program.

The students achieved stellar scores on the 2008 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test when they were juniors, and are among 1,600 Black American high school seniors nationwide who now have the opportunity to compete for Achievement Scholarships or other scholarships offered by colleges and universities, said Bob Lee, director of communications.

Two other seniors – Vincent Caffee of Gahanna and Kym Littlefield of New Albany – were named Outstanding Participants in the same program.

Corbett said her classes helped her prepare for the test.

"I think part of it was the classes I took at the time," she said. "They made the material more fresh in my mind."

Corbett is involved in soccer, cross country, throwing, choir and Film Society at Columbus Academy. She said she'd like to go to colleges that have strong film and computer science programs, in Boston, New York, Chicago and Philadelphia, so that she can eventually have a career in film or creating film-editing software.

Hughes is the varsity tennis captain, in varsity track and Service Board. She'd like to become a dentist after college.

"If it weren't for Columbus Academy, I don't think I would have been an Outstanding Participant, and I don't think I'd be in such a good situation for college."

—Vincent Caffee
Columbus Academy senior

Wheeler said the curriculum at Columbus Academy "stresses the importance of the materials covered on the test.

"We were drilled time and time again to help us master the various sections on the PSAT," he said.

"I also did preparation on my own with an SAT review book. I really approached the test with determination, because I realized the possibility of winning a National Achievement Award.

He is a sprinter on the varsity track team and a member of the school's Christian Fellowship and Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Wheeler's top college choices are Miami University and the University of Richmond. He plans on pursuing a business degree, then entering law school.

Caffee said he didn't prepare much for the test.

"I can't really say what made me do well," he said. "I guess going to Academy helped me prepare for the test."

Caffee plays football, runs track and is a member of Black Organization of Students.

His college choices are University of South Carolina, Miami University, Xavier University, Kent State, College of

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Columbus Academy seniors (from left) Ryan Wheeler, Kym Littlefield, Vincent Caffee, Lindsay Hughes and Zalika Corbett were honored for their high scores on the Preliminary SAT by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

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Charleston and Elon University, with psychology as his intended major.

His career choice is a psychiatrist or psychologist.

"If it weren't for Columbus Academy, I don't think I would have been an Outstanding Participant, and I don't think I'd be in such a good situation for college," he said.

Littlefield said he didn't prepare at all for the test.

"I didn't do anything out of the ordinary to prepare for the test, besides having no homework the night before," he said.

He is president of the Black Affinity Group, captain of the basketball team, school mascot, co-president of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and vice-president of the senior class.

His top college choices are Denison, Miami and Swanee, with psychology as his major and eventual career.

"Columbus Academy is a great school and community that promotes diversity to prepare students for the real world," he said.