

Three students awarded Brian E. Wagner Scholarships

ELMHURST — Since Brian Edwin Wagner's untimely death in a tragic auto accident at age 16, his life story is commemorated through the annual tradition of awarding emerging young leaders like him a \$2,500 college scholarship.

Brian was a diligent example of compassion through his volunteer service in the Elmhurst community and commitment to making a difference in all his endeavors. His determination which is fondly remembered by close family and friends motivated them to create the BEWSF (Brian E. Wagner Scholarship Fund). This non-profit organization encourages high school students to make a positive impact in their lives and the lives of others.

Three recipients were selected for this year's honor for their relentless drive towards success. They have been recognized for their talents to inspire others. All have followed in Brian's footsteps and opened doors for future applicants to do the same. THE BEWSF encourages all high school seniors to apply for the privilege to be named next year's honorees.

James Pukala (York High School) was accepted to Northwestern University and will major in either Economics or Chinese. He stated, "Words cannot express how thankful I am to the BEWSF committee as they have chosen me as someone who resembles the traits of

Brian. They have helped lift the heavy burden of college tuition off my shoulders and I cannot thank them enough."

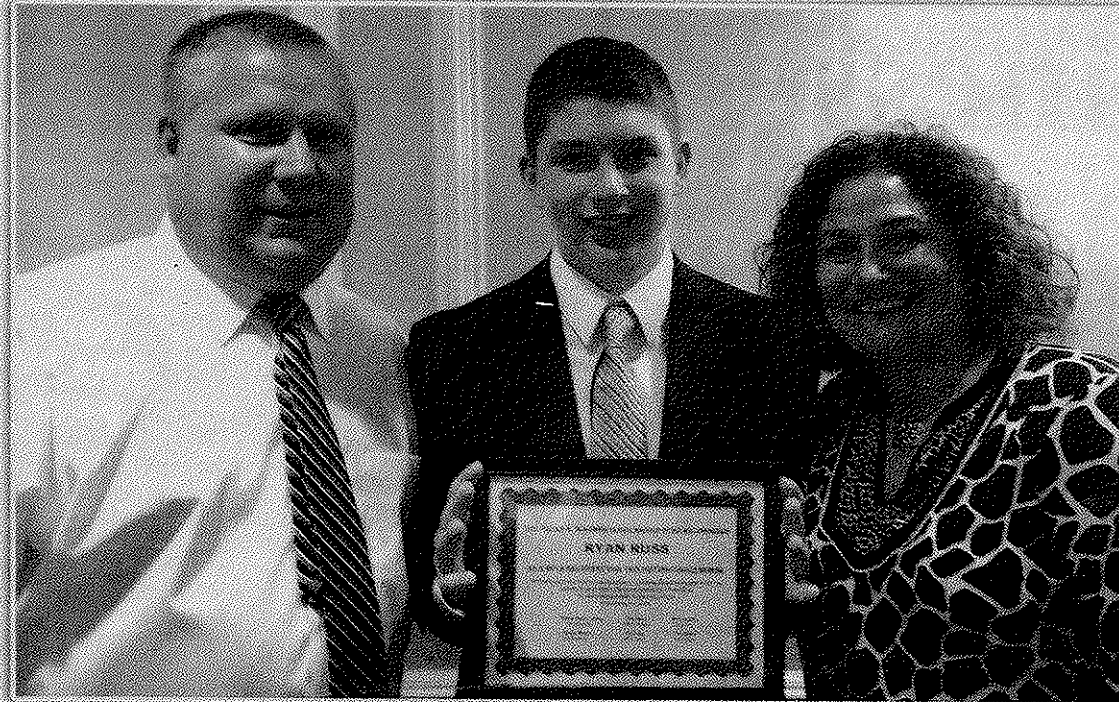
Ryan Russ (Immaculate Conception College Prep) will enroll at the College of DuPage and pursue studies in Fire Science. He said, "I am blessed to receive

this award, and honored to have been selected to receive this generous scholarship. It means a lot to me and my family. I hope to make a difference in this world and to live up to Brian's success. This scholarship will help me make my dreams of getting a college education come true."

Jack Pastuovic (Montini High School) has committed to attend Indiana University and major in Finance and Accounting. Jack remarked, "I am honored to be compared to Brian Wagner. I can't even begin to thank all of the contributors and supporters of the BEWSF. I'm humbled to continue Brian's legacy of hard work, leadership, and commitment to excellence. His story inspires me to make every moment count and to serve as a positive influence in the lives of others."

Dan Gibbons (BEWSF Director) commented, "I think the Brian E. Wagner committee made three great choices in James, Ryan and Jack. They represent the upbeat, positive attitude Brian carried with him on a daily basis, making a difference and doing it with a smile."

Becky Lawton and Tracey Degnan (BEWSF Committee Leaders) expressed the same sentiments for their childhood friend and classmate and look forward to making the future brighter for more deserving students while keeping Brian's memory alive.



Ryan Russ and parents at the ICCP graduation dinner.

Submitted photos

*The Independent Newspapers
Salute*

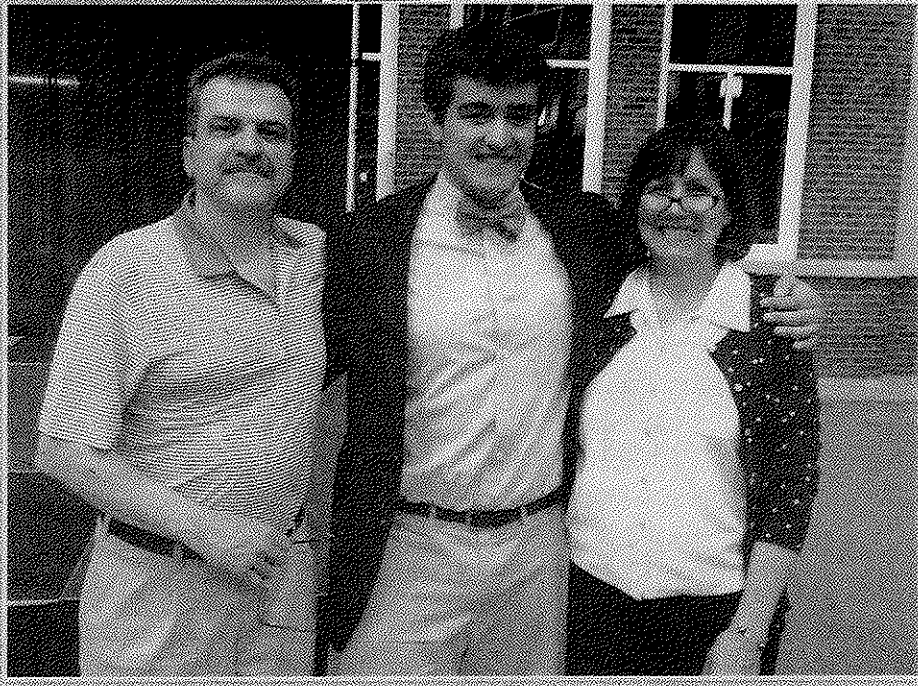


Jack Pastupvic and parents at Montini's academic awards banquet.

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James Pukala and parents at York High School's scholarship event.



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