

## Wendy's Announces National Finalists For The 2015 Wendy's High School Heisman

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DUBLIN, Ohio, Dec. 3, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- It's been a big year for sports and now it's time to recognize those exceptional high school seniors who are competing for the 2015 Wendy's® High School Heisman®. Wendy's is excited to recognize 10 outstanding student-athletes who were recently named National Finalists for the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Wendy's High School Heisman. These 10 National Finalists represent the Wendy's Heisman ideals; they exhibit academic excellence, a strong commitment to their communities and athletic talent.



"From cross country to football to track and field, this year's class of National Finalists are not only scoring on the field, but also through giving back to their communities and excelling in the classroom," said Archie Griffin, two-time collegiate Heisman Memorial Trophy® winner. "For more than 20 years, it's been my privilege to join Wendy's and honor incredible high school seniors not only for their achievements, but also for their exceptional character, drive and commitment to positively impact those around them."

Since 1994, Wendy's High School Heisman has honored the successes of exceptional high school seniors throughout the nation. Wendy's founder, Dave Thomas, believed Wendy's should have a higher purpose to help high school students pursue their passions by providing a platform for continued growth and success. Wendy's continues to honor his legacy by not only recognizing students' athletic accomplishments, but also celebrating the value of being well-rounded by judging his or her academic achievements and community leadership.

"Dave Thomas encouraged students to make education a priority and wanted to set an example of getting the most out of their high school experience," said Liliana Esposito, Wendy's Chief Communications Officer. "After receiving his GED at 61 years old, he was inspired to create the Wendy's High School Heisman program to honor high school students who earn their reputation by the things they do every day."

The 10 National Finalists are listed below. To learn more, visit:

<https://www.wendyshighschoolheisman.com/results/>

### **FEMALE FINALISTS**

**Maggie Beazer, Stansbury High School, Stansbury, UT**

**Taylor Campos, Lemont High School, Lemont, IL**

**Kayla Dobies, Dakota High School, Macomb, MI**

**Seneca Friend, Long Reach High School, Columbia, MD**

**Jada Dayne, Waunakee High School, Waunakee, WI**

**MALE FINALISTS**

**Alek Parsons, Ogden High School, Ogden, UT**

**Zach Hughes, Westminster Christian Academy, Chesterfield, MO**

**Sean Rausch, Longwood High School, Middle Island, NY**

**Rick Basak, Hamden High School, Hamden, CT**

**Ian Saum, Central Cass High School, Casselton, ND**

One male and one female will be named the 2015 National Winners at the Wendy's High School Heisman Award Ceremony at the PlayStation Theater on December 11 and will receive a Wendy's High School Heisman Trophy, a Wendy's High School Heisman National Winner patch, a \$500 Wendy's gift card and a \$5,000 donation awarded to the winners' high school in the students' name. The National Award Winners will also receive special recognition during the ESPN® national telecast of the collegiate Heisman Memorial Trophy presentation. The eight National Finalists who do not go on to become the National Winners will receive a \$100 Wendy's gift card and a \$2,000 donation to each student's high school in the student's name.

**About the Wendy's High School Heisman**

The Wendy's High School Heisman was created by Wendy's founder Dave Thomas in 1994. Dave Thomas dropped out of high school when he was 15 years old in order to work full-time and went on to become one of the most successful entrepreneurs in history. While this nontraditional path led to his prosperity, it always worried Dave that others would follow in his footsteps and expect to achieve similar fame and wealth by not finishing high school or attending college.

Faced with this dilemma, at 60 years old, Dave enrolled at Coconut Creek High School in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., and received his General Equivalency Diploma (GED). Inspired by this moment and with a desire to celebrate the outstanding achievements of youth in America, he launched the Wendy's High School Heisman.

Twenty-two years later, the Wendy's High School Heisman has honored more than 600,000 of the nation's most esteemed high school seniors who share Wendy's values of giving back to their communities, treating people with respect, continuing education and excelling on the athletic field.

The Wendy's High School Heisman is a joint program between Wendy's and the Heisman Trophy Trust, host and custodians of the Heisman Memorial Trophy®. Nolan Henry of Camas, Wash., who has continued his heralded football career at Notre Dame, and Lauren Van Vlierbergen of Algonquin, Ill., who is competing on the cross country and track and field teams at the University of Michigan, received the prestigious award last year.

For a complete list of past Wendy's Heisman finalists and winners or for more information about the program, students can visit [www.WendysHighSchoolHeisman.com](http://www.WendysHighSchoolHeisman.com). Participants can also "Like" and follow Wendy's Heisman on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for additional program details.

**About Wendy's**

The Wendy's Company (NASDAQ: WEN) is the world's third largest quick-service hamburger restaurant chain. The Wendy's system includes more than 6,500 restaurants in 28 countries and U.S. territories. For more information, visit [www.aboutwendys.com](http://www.aboutwendys.com).

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**Contact**

Steven Coulombe

Ketchum Public Relations

(404) 879 - 9292

[Steven.Coulombe@ketchum.com](mailto:Steven.Coulombe@ketchum.com)

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