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### **Three Watertown High School Seniors Named Graf Award Recipients**

For more than 60 years, the William I. Graf Award has recognized the top graduating male and female athletes at Watertown High School. On Wednesday, Stacia Wallace was selected as the top female recipient, and Noah Taylor and James Lamson Jr. were chosen to share the top male honor for this year's Graf awards.

The William I. Graf Award was created in 1954 by the Italian American Civic Association to honor Mr. Graf's leadership and civic engagement in the community. Mr. Graf was a multi-sport coach and athletic director at Watertown High School. Graf award honorees are expected to have participated in at least two or more varsity sports in their senior year and showcase exemplary individual characteristics in sportsmanship, discipline, fair play, training, ability and academics.

Wallace was a four-year varsity player in the Cyclones' volleyball program. She also participated in two years of varsity soccer and one year of track and field. She plans to major in sociology and minor in criminology at McCook Community College in Nebraska. She also earned a Division I junior college scholarship to play volleyball this fall.

Taylor was a four-year varsity lacrosse player and three-year participant on the varsity soccer team at Watertown. He also played one year of varsity basketball. This fall, he will continue his education as a business major at the University at Albany. He also earned a Division I scholarship opportunity to play lacrosse.

Lamson Jr. participated in varsity cross country and wrestling for four years at Watertown High School. He also competed in track and field for one year. He is enrolling at Jefferson Community College and majoring in business this fall.

More than 100 graduating high school seniors have received the Graf Award. Watertown High School's athletics staff selects the recipients each year, and the Italian American Civic

Association presents the award. Last year, following the death of Mr. Graf's son, William A. Graf, the family decided to honor him by funding a financial award for recipients. William A. Graf, who also exemplified the traits of the award, attended Watertown High School and played several varsity sports coached by his father, William I.

Each recipient receives a check for \$500. The Northern New York Community Foundation was selected to help continue the Graf legacy by administering the fund in perpetuity and raising awareness of the award for students striving to earn the honor.

The Northern New York Community Foundation makes grants to support the work of non-profit organizations and provides scholarships to individuals in Jefferson, Lewis and St. Lawrence counties. The Foundation has been built and added to from gifts (both while living and through their legacy plans) by individuals and organizations committed to meeting the changing needs of Northern New York, as well as supporting specific charitable interests and passions.

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