



(Above) Just some of the Atkins trophy winners at the state TSA conference.



WS/FCS photos
Scott Plaster, Principal Joe Childers, Sonya Rexrode, and Monta Ervin accept the Scholastic Cup at the NCASA Annual Meeting.

Atkins High School continues Scholastic Cup winning tradition

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In academics, there's an actual award given by the NC Association of Scholastic Activities (NCASA) for the school that has the best year in academic competitions at the state level.

For the year 2015-16, Atkins High School in Winston-Salem was that dominating school, winning the NCASA Scholastic Cup award by over 300 points and repeating as champions in the 1A small-school division.

"I am excited that our school has won this award for the second consecutive year," said Atkins Principal Joe Childers. "I believe this validates all of the outstanding after-school academic programs at Atkins. Students and teachers are extremely motivated to be the best, and I believe it shows."

Schools striving for the Scholastic Cup compete in a range of seventeen competitions that span nearly every aspect of the school curriculum, from math and science all the way to the

arts and dance. According to NCASA Executive Director Leon Pfeiffer, "Atkins also earned Top Ten points in 12 competitions, also more than any other high school." Top finishes for academic teams this year for Atkins were "HS Large Chapter of the Year" honors at the state TSA conference and state championship runner-up finishes in NCASA Art Showcase and at the NC Chess tournament. Atkins also had an individual category state champion with student Ryan Holmes in the Quill, and the school earned a state champion certificate for one of its Cyberpatriot teams.

"Having such a comprehensive scholastic program is both a blessing and a challenge," said Atkins Scholastic Director Scott Plaster. "Many of the teams at Atkins grew larger this year, and we also added several teams. Sustaining growth and maintaining success will take dedication and focus as we head into next year."

The NCASA Scholastic Cup competitions are not even the full scope of the scholastic program at

Atkins, which also fields academic teams in 13 other areas that are not associated with NCASA, such as HOSA, JLAB, and arts and music programs. Atkins teacher Kevin Hamilton coached some of Atkins' most talented students this year, fielding teams for the NCASA Twelve and Quiz Bowl, but also the local Winston-Salem Forsyth County Academic Team. "The team then ended up repeating as district champion when they beat Reagan in a thrilling come-from-behind win in the championship match," said Coach Kevin Hamilton.

Arel D'Agostino competes in multiple academic competitions at Atkins. "I really love that at Atkins, students have so many opportunities to compete and excel," he said.

Students are so actively involved at Atkins that sometimes they end up double (or even triple) booked as they qualify for regional and state competitions, coupled with juggling their sports team schedules, family commitments, and academic course work. "It's definitely a cultural change in the

building that makes this type of student involvement possible," said Principal Childers. "It wasn't always like this here at Atkins. We literally started with just three competitions and built everything from there," he said. Curriculum Coordinator Sonya Rexrode attributes the high student involvement to the school's unique academic environment. "At Atkins, our students are encouraged to excel and are not afraid to try new things and take risks," said Rexrode.

This type of cultural change is what it takes to make Atkins the dominating force it is in the area of scholastics. Winning the NCASA Scholastic Cup earns Atkins the right to call itself "The Premier Small School in the State of NC." Just as in its heyday of the 1940s and '50s, the "new" Atkins has maintained its tradition of winning.



Atkins player Daniel Winkelman engaged in intellectual battle on the chess board.

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Hospice of Davidson County honored as an Elite Recipient by leading home health analytics

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

LEXINGTON - Hospice of Davidson County, a recognized leader in the advancement of quality end-of-life care across the Piedmont Triad region, has been named a 2016 Hospice Honors Elite recipient by Deyta Analytics, a division of HEALTHCAREfirst, the leading provider of Web-based home health and hospice software, outsourced billing and coding services, and advanced analytics. Hospice Honors Elite is a prestigious program that recognizes hospices providing the highest level of quality as measured from the caregiver's point of view. Hospice of Davidson County is the only Hospice Honors Elite recipient serving patients in the Piedmont Triad community and one of just 57 Elite

recipients nationwide. "Hospice Honors is a landmark compilation of hospices that provide the best patient and caregiver experiences," said Bobby Robertson, President and CEO of HEALTHCAREfirst. "I am extremely proud of Hospice of Davidson County for achieving this highest of honors and I congratulate them on their success."

Award criteria were based on Hospice Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers & Systems (CAHPS) survey results for an evaluation period of April through September 2015. The Hospice CAHPS survey asks patients and their families about their experiences with hospice agencies. Survey responses provide important indicators

as to the quality of care the hospice agency provides. Quality indicators include items such as effectiveness of hospice team communications, providing timely care, assistance with symptom management, and treating family members with respect.

"Hospice of Davidson County is pleased to be named a Hospice Honors Elite provider for the second year in a row," stated Darlene Steele, Director of Quality & Compliance, Hospice of Davidson County. "This national recognition speaks to the high level of service and patient care provided in both our homecare program as well as at the Hinkle Hospice House."

For more information about Hospice of Davidson County, visit www.hospiceofdavidsong.org.

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