



Catholic Central High School student wins 2011 Roger B. Chaffee Scholarship

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By **Ursula Zerilli | The Grand Rapids Press**

By

GRAND RAPIDS — Keegan McCorry, a Catholic Central High School senior, admits that his schedule can be overwhelming at times.

He is not just involved in extracurricular activities, but he often leads them.

McCorry was captain of his rugby and track team. He had a leading role in the school musical, and was president of the National Honors Society. His peers voted him their homecoming king.

He is “brilliant,” according to his teachers, maintaining a 4.44 GPA while enrolled in Advanced Placement classes.

McCorry is the recipient of the 2011 Roger B. Chaffee Scholarship. Chaffee, a Grand Rapids astronaut, died with crew mates Gus Grissom and Ed White in the Apollo 1 spacecraft fire in 1967. His family set up a scholarship fund in his memory for outstanding students who are pursuing a career in math and sciences.

He is the son of Dr. David and Julie McCorry.

“He’s the kid that blows all the stereotypes,” said AP psychology teacher Kris Deyoung. “His commitment to his class and his school is amazing. He gives so much of himself. You can’t find someone that displays what our school is about more than him.”

AP chemistry teacher Leigh Eriks said McCorry’s presence has led to more advanced discussions during her lessons. When she taught how ATP transfers energy in a cell, she said that McCorry “had questions that rattled off in staccato fashion, as his mind raced with ideas.”



Amanda Loman | The Grand Rapids Press

Teachers praise Keegan McCorry's commitment to learning and challenging himself and others.

It got to the point where she simply couldn't answer him. She referred him to a university research student.

"All top students can take in information and process it, but as a science teacher, you love a kid that can take it in and has more questions about what they want to know," Eriks said.

Why does McCorry take on so much? Because he can.

"Mostly, I like doing them," McCorry said. "They are all big passions, and as long as you utilize the free time you have, it's doable."

McCorry turned down admission to the University of Michigan for a full-ride scholarship at Michigan State University next fall.

He is worried about choosing a major because he has so many interests, but hopes to study nanotechnology to find a cure for cancer.

He wants to help design anti-cancer agents that can be put in the bloodstream to battle the disease.

"I'm glad he's pursuing his interests but part of me is sad he's not getting into performing. I can see him being a brilliant show host on the science channel," Deyoung said, who recently watched a video McCorry's team created for a psychological disorders project.

"I think a lot of people would watch him because he's so talented."

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