Gateway athletes become community leaders

Huntington- On Friday October 20, Gateway Athletic Director Matthew Bonenfant took a group of student athletes to the first of three MIAA Student Ambassador trainings. The three students taking part in this program are Alexander Auclair, Lily Waters, and Jessica VanHeynigen.

The MIAA student ambassador program brings student athletes together from all over Massachusetts to collaborate on community service and leadership topics. In total, over 140 Massachusetts student athletes are taking part in the program.

Senior Alexander Auclair spoke about the experience. “We went into this with the goal of being able to plan a community service project that we could take back to Gateway to benefit the community around us. We talked about the importance of being a leader and what qualities a great leader should posses. It was really cool to meet athletes from other schools and to be able to come up with ideas for projects that can benefit our towns and their surroundings.”

Athletic director Matthew Bonenfant sees this opportunity given by MIAA as one that is crucial in developing advantageous leadership skills. “It’s good for student athletes to assume leadership roles outside of the on-field situations. It is also very valuable for them to meet other students-athletes from different areas and share ideas on how to improve their communities.” The whole experience was very beneficial to our Gateway athletes.

These sessions will happen twice more this school year, once in the winter and once in the spring, with the same group of students attending. This experience was funded by the Gateway Education Foundation, which funds staff-led projects that would not be covered by the Gateway budget. The foundation funded this project with the hope of it benefiting the student athletes taking part, their teammates, and the Gateway community.

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Photo (left to right): Gateway junior Lily Waters and seniors Alex Auclair and Jessica VanHeynigen arrive for their MIAA Student Ambassador training.