

# Knockout Basketball Tournament deemed a success, raises \$3,000

Small ideas can become big realities as was the case on June 2.

The idea of Alexander Grano, 9, to have a small basketball event on his backyard court to help raise money to fight cancer turned into a large tournament with many sponsors, almost 100 participants, prizes and an "awesome" showing of support from the community and area college basketball teams.

The Grano family raised almost \$3,000 to benefit the Ride For Roswell through the Knockout Basketball Tournament. While having a great time, lessons were taught to the youths who attended, Alexander's mother, Jackie, said.

"One of the moms of a boy in the tournament came up to me at work to say 'thank you' for the impact the tournament has had on her son. She said his older sister had done some things for children's hospital in the past, but her son was never really part of anything," Jackie said. "Since the tourney, he has been showing his friends his wristband and telling them how he helped to knock out cancer."

She added that the boy wanted to write something in his elementary school paper about the tournament.

"That is all the motivation we need to make this an annual event. That was the whole point of the tournament, to make an impact on the kids. ... From this



Canisius College basketball players congratulate Colin Downing on his winning three point shot during the Knockout Basketball Tournament held June 2. Pictured from left to right are: Frank Turner, Papi a'Nyam, Jovan Robinson, and Shaun James.

mom's unsolicited testimonial, it was a success," she said.

There were 12 game winners who each won a free week to either Happyland Day Camp, Canisius, Daemen, Medaille, Niagara, Park, UB or Sal's Summer basketball camps. Twelve runner-ups each got a SnapSports basketball, and 12 more "second-chance" winners walked away with either \$50 gift certificates from Dick's Sporting Goods, UB and Canisius basketballs or athletic bags and other sports equipment donated from SnapSports and the NCAA.

During the event, players from Canisius, Niagara, and UB volun-

teered their time, shooting baskets with the youths and signing autographs.

A highlight was when Tom Parrotta, men's basketball head coach from Canisius, spontaneously announced that he would give a free week to Canisius Basketball Camp, a \$200 value, to anyone at the event who could sink one three-point shot. After a long line of shooters, Colin Downing and Christian Curatolo came up victorious.

"A big thank you from the Grano family goes out to everyone connected to the event. See you next year," Jackie said.

## Community News

The Amherst Community Church Child Care Center recently won a tree through WGRZ's tree giveaway to help reforest Western New York. The tree was dedicated to Lise Harty for her efforts in fundraising for the new playground at the center. She spent three years organizing events to purchase the equipment.

Temple Beth Zion has named Assistant Rabbi Ilana Schwartzman to the clergy staff. She is the daughter of Rabbi Joel Schwartzman and the granddaughter of a rabbi. She will join Senior Rabbi Harry Rosenfeld.

Fresh brewed ice tea that could have been poured from Grandma's Mason jar.



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## JCC presents Ralph Kushner Volunteer Service Award for 2007

The Jewish Community Center, at the annual board of directors meeting on June 26, presented the JCC Ralph Kushner Volunteer Service Award for 2007. The award was established in 1998 and named after the longtime community volunteer.

This year's recipients were Amy Marks Shaevel and Melissa Milch-Klein. They were honored for their work in creating the JCC's Early Childhood Parent Teacher Group at the Benderson Family Building.

The group has engaged many of the early childhood parents in their children's school, education and social networking. In addition, Shaevel and Milch-Klein have succeeded in raising funds with a variety of programming efforts. The funds were used for grants to teachers, and the purchase of classroom equip-

ment and educational materials. They also sponsored a thank you dinner for teachers and staff of the early childhood program.

Shaevel, who lives in Williamsville with her husband, Andrew, and her son, Lewis, graduated from the University of Western Ontario with a Bachelor of Arts degree with honors and holds a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree from the University of Toronto.

Milch-Klein and her husband, Warren, have two children, Ari and Hannah. She graduated from the University of Rochester with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish and education. She also holds a master's degree from Binghamton University.

Both are former school teachers and are in the business of private tutoring.

## Students receive recognition from Buffalo Seminary

Buffalo Seminary seniors from Williamsville were honored recently at the school's annual Class Day and Moving Up ceremony.

Tara Ashraf was recognized as the recipient of the Cally Montezano '74 Award. The award is given to a junior or senior who has "developed confidence and leadership during her years at Buffalo Seminary and distinguished herself as a young woman of great spirit, humility and kindness."

Ashraf also received the Spanish Language Award. She will attend St. John Fisher College in the fall.

Christine Driscoll was honored as the recipient of the History Department Award. The award, which was presented by Department Chair Harry B. Schooley, is

given to the senior who has "demonstrated interest, enthusiasm and excellence in the study of history."

She also was inducted into the Cum Laude Society. She will attend University of Michigan in the fall.

Katharine Dryden, a violist, received the Ensemble Award, for her dedication to playing in the school orchestra. She also was a recipient of the Math Department Award in Honor of Jane Turner.

Dryden also was honored as the senior class recipient of the Semper Fidelis Award, which was presented by Head of School Sandra P. Gilmor and is given to "that girl in each class who best reflects the goals of the school, has demonstrated intellectual growth and a caring attitude, is actively involved in her school and out-

side communities, and can and does express and defend her points of view." She will attend Yale University in the fall.

Juniors Sara O'Donnell of Williamsville and Elizabeth Stewart of East Amherst were also honored. Sara Sieczkarski, science department chair, presented both awards.

O'Donnell was the recipient of the St. Lawrence University Book Award, which is given to the junior who "has unselfishly given of herself through service to her community."

Stewart was honored as the recipient of the Wellesley Book Award. This award is given to a junior who has "made an outstanding contribution to her school and/or community in terms of leadership, citizenship and scholastic achievement."

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