

Hazelwood West High School senior Gracemary Nganga accepted into 22 universities



Decisions, decisions. Hazelwood West High School senior Gracemary Nganga is like many of her peers this time of year, as she weighs her options and chooses where to attend college. What sets Nganga apart, though, is the fact her decision might be a little tougher. How could it not be when you have 22 schools from which to choose? Throughout the course of her senior year, Nganga has received acceptance letters from almost two dozen different schools. "I just really wanted options when it came to school and to make sure I could compare things like aid, support, resources, and I applied to a variety of different schools," she said. The names of the schools are as impressive as the number itself, including: Stanford, Yale, Washington University, Notre Dame, Emory, Oxford College of Emory, USC, Duke, Spelman College, Xavier in Louisiana, Franklin and Marshall, Pomona, Claremont McKenna, Hamilton, Swarthmore, Bowdoin, Grinnell, Saint Louis University, UMKC, Mizzou, DePaul, and UMSL. Keep in mind that list doesn't include the schools for which Nganga was put on the wait list, among those were Dartmouth and Vanderbilt. Nganga admits she has narrowed her list down to five schools - Stanford, Yale, Washington University, Notre Dame, and Emory. She will visit some of her top choices in April before making a final decision May 1. "Obviously the academics at all of these schools are amazing," said Nganga, who plans to pursue pre-med. "I'd be surrounded by brilliant students and professors who have done so much in their fields, so now it's about finding where I belong." It seems Nganga would be a natural fit at any of the 22 schools, having excelled throughout her academic career in the Hazelwood School District since emigrating from Kenya with her family before the second grade. She is the true definition of a student leader, having started the African American Cultural Association at West High School, along with two separate student clubs focused on social justice and awareness. A tough decision, yes, but one that Nganga has worked hard to earn, and one she hopes will motivate other students at West High School. "It was a lot to take in because it's very surreal," she said. "It's something you dream about and just having that goal of being accepted into top universities, and for me to actually get there and be accepted and have them want me there, it's a dream come true."

(online story)

http://www.stlamerican.com/news/local_news/hazelwood-west-high-school-senior-gracemary-nganga-accepted-into-universities/article_66cfc9c0-5f81-11e9-8dfe-9b9ab30ae40e.html

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WORKING TOWARD A BRIGHT FUTURE

They are our potential leaders, our next generation of successful men and women; shaping our community and working to build a brighter future. They are our "A" Students.

Returning for its 55th year, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch "A" Student Program is once again recognizing students for their hard work and unparalleled academic determination. Each student maintained an "A" average over a designated time period this school year.

This longstanding tradition started in 1965 when the St. Louis Post-Dispatch Newspapers in Education (NIE) Program teamed up with the St. Louis Cardinals to reward these young scholars. NIE is an educational program that uses the newspaper as a teaching resource for promoting literacy and learning as well as community and global perspectives.

NIE is proud to acknowledge these "A" students. Each one displays a level of academic excellence that deserves recognition. Over 41,000 students, grades 9 through 12, are honored each year – from 197 NIE schools in the St. Louis Metropolitan area. The student is awarded two tickets to a St. Louis Cardinals home game of their choice.

Participating schools are listed alphabetically. Congratulations to all "A" students on this exceptional accomplishment!

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TRACK AND FIELD • HENLE HOLMES INVITATIONAL

IMPRESSIVE CAMEO

Days after running nation's fastest 400, Robinson rolls in 100 appearance

BY DAVID KVIDAHL

STLhighschoolsports.com

CHESTERFIELD • The fastest quarter-miler in the country isn't half bad at the 100-meter dash.

Hazelwood West junior standout Justin Robinson traveled to the high-powered Arcadia Invitational in California on Saturday and put on a show.

Robinson won the 400-meter race, also known as the quarter mile, in 46.22 seconds. It's the fastest 400 in the country this spring. Robinson took second in the 200 in 21.06, the fastest 200 in Missouri this spring and a personal-best time.

Making those times all the more impressive is that Robinson wasn't happy with how either race went.

"I didn't do what I wanted. I got off my rhythm a little bit and didn't finish the way I wanted to," Robinson said. "I'm still glad I finished as the U.S. No. 1."

Robinson and the rest of the Wildcats competed Thursday on the first day of the Henle Holmes Invitational at Parkway Central. Even on a day where he was just getting in some speed work, Robinson managed to turn heads.

Robinson entered the 100 preliminary race, and with a strong wind at his back, rolled to victory in his heat in a new meet record of 10.32. It's the top time in Missouri, giving Robinson the fastest 100, 200 and 400 this spring.

McCluer North sophomore standout Angelo Butts, whose 10.77 mark was the state's top 100 time prior to Thursday, was the second-fastest qualifier in 10.65. MICDS senior Josh Sutton was the third-fastest qualifier in 10.84.

SUTTON ADJUSTS TO LIFE AS THE HUNTED

Josh Sutton is no stranger to opening eyes. The 5-foot-5 Sutton has grown accustomed to being overlooked because he's not the biggest guy on the track.



GORDON RADFORD • Special to STLhighschoolsports.com

Hazelwood West's Justin Robinson runs in the 100 meter dash during the Henle Holmes Invitational on Thursday at Parkway Central High School.

But this year is different for the MICDS senior. The reigning Class 4 state champion in the 100 and 200, Sutton has gone from afterthought to target.

"In past years no one was really looking out for me. When I stepped onto the track it was like, 'Oh, it's a small guy. He's not going to do too hot,'" Sutton said. "This year people actually know who I am. They make sure they give me a run for my money."

He qualified for the finals in the 100 and 200. Sutton was not expecting to be the target in the 100. Hazelwood West's Justin Robinson would have had that honor, but he said he does not plan to compete in the final after setting the meet record with a wind-aided 10.32. Sutton was looking forward to competing against one of the fastest in the country.

"I'm excited for that race," Sutton said. "I heard his time today and my thought process is if I'm going to run against him I think I could PR because I'll definitely have to work to come close to beating him."

TIME FLIES FOR FULLER

When she was a freshman at John Burroughs, Madison Fuller arrived at the Henle Holmes Invitational and torched the track with victories in the 100 and 200, a pair of events she would go on to win at the Class 3 state championships.

Now a senior, Fuller's high school career has taken twists and turns. She missed her entire sophomore season recovering from an injury. She was healthy her junior year right until the sectional meet. Shortly after winning the 100, she suffered another injury prior to state.

Fuller enters her final season hopeful and ready to step into bigger role for the Bombers.

"As of now I feel stronger than I have before," Fuller said. "It feels good to be back on the track. We have a lot of new freshmen on our team and I've taken on more of a leadership role."

Fuller won her heat in the 200, running away in 25.84.

"I wish the conditions could have been a little bit better," Fuller said. "I'm working with what I have and so far it's going great."

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