



THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ATHLETES

A 501 c 3 Non-Profit Organization
www.naaaa.com

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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African American Scholar Athletes receive top Honors

Los Angeles, CA (December 22, 2011) – On **Saturday, February 18, 2012, at 6:00pm**, The National Alliance of African American Athletes (The Alliance) will recognize another stellar group of high school athletes from across the nation for the **Franklin D. Watkins Memorial Award**. The award is presented each year to the nation's top African American male high school scholar athlete.

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The six finalists in alphabetical order are:

* Zachery Banner, Tacoma, WA – Washington State Academic Achiever, Distinguished Scholar Award, Volunteer for Tacoma Sports Association, Middle School Mentor for 4 middle Schools, Ignite Mentor, US Army All American, 1st Team USA Today, All State Football while maintaining a 3.5 GPA at Lakes High School.

* Alexander Carter, Ashburn, VA – People to People Student Ambassador, National Youth Leadership Council, Volunteer at Christmas Gifts for Abused Women, Volunteer Tutor, Volunteer Little League Coach, Volunteer Reader to Elementary School Students, Virginia Consensus All American, and US Army All-American while maintaining a 4.1 GPA at Briar Woods High School.

* Jonathan Curry, Phenex City, AL - Member of the National Honor Society, National Beta Club, National Society of High School Scholars, Who's Who Among All All-American Scholars, National Junior Beta Club, Alabama-Mississippi All American, Special Olympics Volunteer, and Top 16 ESPN while maintaining a 4.0 GPA at Central High School.

* Keith Marshall, Raleigh, NC – Member of the National Honor Society, Volunteer for Habitat for Humanity, Pop Warner Assistant, Volunteer to feed the homeless, #1 Running Back in the Nation, State Champion in 100 Meter Dash, North Carolina All State, All American, North Carolina Player of the Year, and Under Armour All American while maintaining a 4.3 GPA at Millbrook High School.

* Deion Williams, Long Beach, CA – Member of the National Honors Society, Member of the National Leadership Forum, People to People Student Ambassador, Member of the Honors Choir, Captain of Football and Wrestling Teams, and One of the Top Linebackers in the Nation while maintaining a 3.7 GPA at Lutheran High School of Orange.

* James Winston, Birmingham, AL – USA Today Scholar Athlete, Academic Excellence Honor Roll, Max Prep Sports Scholar Athlete, Hueytown Community Tutor, Hueytown Youth Baseball Instructor, Alabama All State, 1st Team All American Max Prep Sports, #1 Quarterback in the Nation USA Today, Elite 11 MVP, Baseball All American, #4 Football Player in the Nation, and Under Armour All American while maintaining a 4.0 GPA at Hueytown High School.

“Empowerment Through Education and Athletics”



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The Watkins Award ceremony will be held at the prestigious Millennium Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles, California.

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"The 2012 Watkins Award features an incredible year of fine student athletes," Everette Pearsall, Executive Director of The Alliance, shares. "Each of these young men are well equipped for success academically. We have continued to recognize and honor the premier African American Scholar Athletes in the United States."

Finalists are chosen based on their unweighted grade point average, their personal statements, extra curricular activities, community service, and letters of recommendation. Each winner will be recognized in Los Angeles, receive an award, ring, and dinner in their hometown.

Sponsors of this year's event include Wells Fargo, Under Armour, Peoples Financial Services, Bacardi, Roscoe's Chicken and Waffles, UBS, Nash Management Group, Stephon Valentine Limos and Jostens Corporation who manufactures and donates the Watkins Award trophy and rings.

Media representatives are invited to cover the awards ceremony. For more information about the Watkins Award, The Alliance, or to get tickets for the awards ceremony visit our website at www.naaaa.com or email everedy@aol.com

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The Watkins Award is presented annually to African American scholar-athletes since 1992, the Watkins Award is named for Franklin D. Watkins, the coach of championship football and basketball teams in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Previous awardees include Rhodes Scholar, Myron Rolle of the Tennessee Titans, Justin Blalock of the Atlanta Falcons, Gerald McCoy & Arrelious Benn of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Ben Tate of the Houston Texans, Ted Ginn Jr. of the San Francisco 49ers., Lorenzo Alexander of the Washington Redskins, Mohammed Massaquoi of the Cleveland Browns, Darnell Dinkins of the New Orleans Saints, LaVarr Arrington of the Washington Redskins, Joseph Barksdale, Grant Irons and Ronald Curry present & formerly of the Oakland Raiders, Mercedes Lewis of Jacksonville Jaguars and Ernie Sims of the Philadelphia Eagles..

The National Alliance of African American Athletes was founded in 1989. The mission of The Alliance is to empower African American males through athletics, education and public programs.

"Empowerment Through Education and Athletics"