

Henry Schein Medical Announces Winner of Its 2023 Rising Star Award Program

April 10, 2023

Recognition Honors Athletic Trainers for their Dedication Toward Advancing the Athletic Training Profession, While Keeping Athletes in the Game

MELVILLE, N.Y.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Apr. 10, 2023-- Henry Schein Medical, the U.S. medical business of Henry Schein, Inc. (Nasdaq: HSIC), announced Gina Harris, Head Athletic Trainer at Bellport High School in Brookhaven, New York, as the winner of the third annual Henry Schein Medical Athletics and Schools [Rising Star Award](#). The award celebrates emerging athletic trainers with one to five years of experience in the Sports Medicine industry.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230407005119/en/>



2023 Rising Star Award Winner, Gina Harris, Head Athletic Trainer at Bellport High School. (Photo: Business Wire)

In honor of National Athletic Training Month observed in March, the award recognizes recently graduated athletic trainers who have not yet reached a senior chief-level position but have a strong career trajectory with the potential of forward advancement and appointment at the highest levels of the profession. The Rising Star Award program began in 2021 with winner [Darlene Eckhardt](#), Head Athletic Trainer at the Buffalo Beauts, a professional women's ice hockey team, becoming Henry Schein's first Rising Star. In 2022, [Caitlin Hart](#), Head Athletic Trainer at Newberry High School in Newberry, South Carolina, received the recognition.

"We congratulate Gina Harris for being named the 2023 Rising Star Award winner," said Eric Kearns, Director, Henry Schein Medical's Athletics and Schools business. "It is because of athletic trainers like Ms. Harris, and all the Rising Star Award nominees, that the future of athletic training is promising. Athletic trainers play a pivotal role in the health, safety, and wellness of athletes, and their dedication to the profession should not go unnoticed."

From running rehabilitation programs out of the high school's athletic training room, to attending doctors' appointments with athletes, or purchasing food for students who may not have the means to access healthy options, this year's Rising Star Award winner, Gina Harris, was honored for being the foundation of athletics at [Bellport High School](#). She hosts Sunday recovery for athletes, helping to ensure students get back in the game as soon as possible, and also established a cardiac screening day for four hundred athletes, helping to detect cardiac abnormalities. Additionally, Ms. Harris added a work-based learning program to the high school, where students can shadow her and learn about the athletic training profession.

"I thank Henry Schein Medical Athletics and Schools and my community for recognizing me as the 2023 Rising Star," said Ms. Harris. "Athletic trainers are vital to health care, and I am grateful to have this platform to help elevate the value of having an athletic trainer on staff. I feel incredibly fortunate for the opportunity to help make a greater impact on this astounding profession."

Ms. Harris was among the finalists who demonstrated ongoing achievements and contributions to their institutions and the profession:

- Caitlyn Bucco, Head Athletic Trainer, [Half Hollow Hills High School East](#) (Dix Hills, New York)
- Ms. Bucco recently performed a life-saving intervention at Half Hollow Hills High School East, using an automated external defibrillator (AED) and performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to save the life of

a student's parent who suffered a cardiac arrest during a basketball game. The individual survived and is alive and well today.

- Brittany Cardone, Head Athletic Trainer, [Anahuac High School](#) (Anahuac, Texas)
 - Ms. Cardone was the first full-time athletic trainer on campus at Anahuac Independent School District. Over the last several years, she developed a student-athletic training program, allowing many students to explore various careers in the medical field while obtaining firsthand experience.
- Nicole Rizzo, Athletic Trainer, [East Stroudsburg Area School District](#) (East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania)
 - Ms. Rizzo works to break the stigma surrounding mental health. She advocates for her student athletes, and is working on an initiative to help create an after-school program for students facing mental health struggles. Because of her efforts, the school has implemented a mental health emergency action plan.
- John Sunchild, Athletic Trainer, [Rocky Boy Health Center](#) (Box Elder, Montana)

- *Mr. Sunchild is committed to bringing athletic training services to Native Americans living on rural reservations. He established the first athletic training position on his home reservation, building the role from the ground up. Becoming a member of the Northwest Athletic Trainers' Association Ethnic Diversity Advisory Committee, Mr. Sunchild has been instrumental in identifying and addressing issues faced by people of color as they pursue careers in athletic training.*
- Dillon Zarrelli, Clinical Assistant, [Carolina Family Practice and Sports Medicine](#) (Raleigh, North Carolina)
 - *Mr. Zarrelli partnered with a fellow athletic trainer to resuscitate a spectator who collapsed during the City of Oaks Volleyball Challenge. While his colleague performed CPR, Dillon quickly secured an AED, administering shocks between compressions. The man's heart restarted, and paramedics were able to transport the patient.*

The finalists were nominated by their peers and selected by a Recognition Committee that included athletic trainers and industry experts in the field. Together, the committee members have experience from an athletic training perspective of a broadly diverse size, type, and geographic distribution.

As the winner, Ms. Harris will receive an athletic trainer's kit filled with Essity supplies and a Compex Sport Elite 3.0 muscle stimulator. For more information about the Rising Star Award winner and finalists, [click here](#). To learn more about Henry Schein Medical's Athletics and Schools business, [click here](#).

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Ann Marie Gothard
 Vice President, Global Corporate Media Relations
Annmarie.gothard@henryschein.com
 (631) 390-8169

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