

## Program rewards doing right thing

### CAREacter awards go beyond athletics

BY MARK BURGESS  
burgess@knews.com

It happens in every school.

Glorified are the touchdown makers. Often forgotten are the good-grade makers.

The strong-armed quarterback gets star treatment, while the third-string, 5-foot-8, 135-pound defensive back who delivers food to the needy works in obscurity.

Lenoir City High School teacher Dave Moore has seen it happen too often in his 31 years as an educator and coach.

That's why he's spearheading the CAREacter Star Athlete of the Week program.

Through Moore's program, coaches and schools are given a chance to recognize the "other" stars, the players who simply "do right."

"That's the basis of the program," Moore said. "What about the kid who may not play much? He may be on special teams or just rest the starters, but he practices every day and he's on time and he's in class. He's a good kid and he's trying hard to do things the right way.

"We've kind of missed that kid. Those are the kids we want to reward."

The program has branched out from its start in Loudon County a year ago to include nine Knox-area counties, four schools in Virginia, one in Kentucky, one in Georgia, the University of Tennessee, UT-Chattanooga, Carson-Newman and Maryville College.

"We're getting slammed with positive response and feedback from coaches and parents," Moore said. "It's everything and more I thought it would be."

### CAREACTER STAR ATHLETES

#### High School

Anderson County  
Clinton  
Oak Ridge  
Alcoa  
Heritage  
Maryville  
William Blount  
Campbell County  
Jellico  
Austin East  
Bearden  
Catholic  
CAK  
Carter  
Central  
Farragut  
Fulton  
Gibbs  
Grace  
Halls  
Karns  
Powell  
South Doyle

#### Athlete

Cody Seiber  
Weston Hazelhurst  
Jeremy Vaughan  
Randell Cobb  
Michael Lindsey  
Jeremy Sands  
Alex Holley  
Open  
Travis Sowders  
Josh Hinch  
Shawn Cunningham  
Matt Pfeifer  
Trevor Brown  
Jake McDaniel  
Jermain Kirkland  
Alex Encarnacion  
Phillip Bates  
Brandon McMahan  
Brandon Lipps  
Wesley Kitts  
Briar Fritts  
Kenny Cruze  
Derek Wilcox

#### High School

TSD  
Webb  
West  
Greenback  
Lenoir City  
Loudon  
Coalfield  
Oakdale  
Sunbright  
Wartburg Central  
Harriman  
Kingston  
Midway  
Oliver Springs  
Rockwood  
Oneida  
Scott  
Gatlinburg-Pittman  
King's Academy  
Pigeon Forge  
Sevier County  
Seymour

#### Athlete

John Darr  
Ward Farmer  
Larry Hurston  
Bunkie Van Skiver  
Sam Keener  
Josh Hawkins  
Chris Lowe  
T.J. Ruppe  
John Watson  
Matt Rose  
Travis Gann  
Josh King  
Seth Lyle  
B.B. Bailey  
Ronnie Dyer  
Shay West  
Stephen Kries  
Hunter Turner  
Lane Beam  
Cody Fleming  
Will Hewitt  
Tyler Gamble

"When people see these kids out on the street, or a Wal-Mart, or at Red Lobster, if they're wearing that T-shirt, I'm hoping people will go give them a pat on the back because it's a complete, total person award," Moore said. "They've been singled out as a person who is doing right in a time when so many aren't doing right."

Possible donors, sponsors and volunteers can reach Moore or Vaughn at care365star@yahoo.com, by calling 865-966-CARE, or writing them at 12235 Northshore Dr., Knoxville, TN, 37922.

Coaches select players based on five criteria — attitude, character, grades, community service and performance.

"Performance isn't just based on how they play for two hours on Friday or Saturday," Moore said. "It's how they perform all week in practice, on and off the field.

"He may be a 5-foot-2, 115-pound twig his freshman year, but eventually by doing right and doing the things that make up a successful person in the game of life, that kid will eventually succeed."

Every award winner — from UT to the smallest high school in East Tennessee — gets the same award.

Each week coaches nominate a player who receives a certificate and T-shirt featuring the five points of criteria pictured interlocking in the five points of a star.

"I think everyone appreciates what it means and what it stands for," Moore said. "You want that solid individual. As coaches and

teachers, we want to develop those solid people.

"To do that, we need to start basing their recognition on seven days a week, not just those two hours."

Cissie Vaughn, Moore's partner in organizing the CAREacter program, had an eye-opening experience when she delivered an award recently to Tennessee School for the Deaf.

"I witnessed a very special, emotional moment between coach (Dick) Henley and his player Dakota Thompson," Vaughn said. "It was then that I realized how deeply this program was touching the hearts of student athletes and coaches in a very positive way."

The program will continue with boys and girls basketball in the winter and baseball and softball in the spring.

As funds and volunteers become available, Moore has a vision of the program spreading to every sport in as many Tennessee counties as possible.