



MAYOR CHRIS BOLLWAGE

CITY OF ELIZABETH PRESS RELEASE



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“YOUTH OF THE YEAR” AWARD

ELIZABETH, N.J. May 27, 2008 – The Mayor’s “Youth of the Year” Award represents the pride that the City of Elizabeth has for its students of today and its citizens of the future. This Year, Strawberry Gallagher and Ahmad Samir Abdul Zaher, seniors of Elizabeth High School, received the prestigious award, presented by Honorable J. Christian Bollwage, Mayor of the City of Elizabeth.

“Every year we honor exceptional students who not only excel in school but are active community leaders,” stated Mayor Bollwage. “On behalf of the entire City, I wish them well in all future endeavors and thank them for their commitment and dedication.”

Strawberry Gallagher and Ahmad Samir Abdul Zaher, seniors at Elizabeth High School, were nominated by their high school principal, for outstanding leadership in school organizations and community service.

Every year, a committee of representative members of the community is assigned the task of selecting one student from among many qualified others nominated by the principals of the public, private, and parochial high schools in Elizabeth. This year’s committee members included: Mr. Bruce M. Elfein, Chairperson (non-voting) Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent of Schools, Elizabeth Board of Education; Mr. Joseph Caporaso, Retired Elementary School Principal; and Mr. Ken Richuso, Vice President of B.B. Miller Company.

Since its inception forty-three years ago, the “Youth of the Year” Award has recognized students for their leadership in school and for their service to the community-at-large.

Strawberry resides in Elizabeth with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Gallagher.

Her Guidance counselor, Ms. Linda Lauerman, states: “Strawberry is an extraordinary young woman who is passionate about her academic endeavors. She handles a challenging course load and works diligently to maintain her scholastic standing.

Miss Gallagher plans to attend Rowan University in September 2008. She was also offered acceptance to Syracuse University, The College of Saint Elizabeth, and SUNY- Oswego.

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Strawberry is a Peer Leader and a member of the National Honor Society, the Italian Honor Society, the Student Government, the Science Club, the Outdoor Appreciation Club and Skills USA. Her most notable accomplishment is as President of the Key Club, where she not only leads but also has garnered 128 hours of community service herself.

Strawberry is dedicated to helping others and is constantly searching for ways Elizabeth High School students can contribute to their community. Strawberry is a remarkable student who has displayed excellence throughout all of her endeavors at Elizabeth High School.”

Ahmad resides in Elizabeth with his father, Mr. Abdul Zaher, and his brother.

His Guidance counselor, Ms. Eleanor Gatling, states: “Ahmad is truly a remarkable young man who will surely reach his educational goals. He has excelled in all academic areas and shows superior ability in handling all challenges.

Ahmad works almost forty hours a week to help his family. He does not allow this to interfere with his accomplishments in school. He says that this is a minor hurdle that he must get over so that he can continue his education on the college level.

He has proven to be a leader through his hard work, self-determination and involvement in school activities. He is a member of the National Honor Society, a Peer Leader, Treasurer of Skills USA, Model United Nations, Chess Club, the Golf Team, American Red Cross Volunteer, Book Drive, Junior Ranger Day (beach Clean Up) and a tutor for a Bilingual Student.

Ahmad will be attending Kean University, majoring in Accounting/Marketing. I am confident that he has the drive, the desire, and the intellectual stamina to make a significant contribution in the future.”

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