Wilsonville Youth Sports
John Walls Memorial Scholarship
Wilsonville High School 2017 Application

Wilsonville Youth Sports (WYS) will award one $1,000 college scholarship to a student in the 2017 graduating class at Wilsonville High School (WHS) to be used in the 2017-2018 academic year.

Criteria:

- Be a graduating senior at Wilsonville High School who will be attending a college, university, or trade school.
- Have a minimum GPA of 2.0.
- Have contributed to sports within the Wilsonville Community either through the WYS or Wilsonville High School. The contribution can consist of playing, coaching, game announcing, team management, refereeing, or other sports-related activities.

Application Process:

1. Submit a cover page listing your name, mailing address, email address, phone number, and the university/college/trade school you will be attending (if undecided, please list schools to which you’ve been accepted).
2. Attach a copy of your unofficial high school transcript.
3. Attach two recommendation letters - one from a Wilsonville High School staff member (on school letterhead), and one from a coach or other member of the community (use attached form). A community member is someone who knows you outside of school and does not include a family member or peers. Each recommendation letter should be placed in an envelope and signed across the envelope seal.
4. Read the attached “John Walls’ Story” and write an essay (maximum two pages, typed, double spaced) answering the following questions:
   1. What youth sport(s) or WHS sport have you played? And/or supported through volunteerism?
   2. What kind of adversity have you faced which sports helped have helped you persevere?
   3. What about John’s story inspires you the most?
   4. What does your community mean to you and how have you given back or plan to in the future?

These materials must be submitted to Mrs. Tucker in the WHS College & Career Center by 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 5, 2017. **NO APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THIS TIME.** Any applications that do not have all of the above-mentioned items will not be considered.

The winner of the scholarship will be announced at Senior Awards Night during graduation week. WYS reserves the right to rescind a scholarship if the WYS, in its discretion, determines it is necessary. The money will be deposited directly into the student's account at his/her college, university or trade school.
2017 Wilsonville Youth Sports (WYS)
John Walls Memorial Scholarship

Student (Applicant) Name: _____________________________

Community Member Recommendation

Dear Community Member: The student from whom you received this form is applying for the WYS John Walls Memorial Scholarship worth $1,000 towards his/her continuing education. Thank you for answering the following questions regarding the student.

The John Walls Memorial Scholarship is awarded to a WHS Senior with a “Relentless” spirit. A student who, having faced adversity, continued in their relentless pursuit to live life to its fullest and participate in or support school athletics.

Your Name: __________________________ Phone #: __________________________

How long and in what capacity have you known the student?

What are the first words that come to your mind when you think of the student?

Character traits that best describe the student:

Other comments: (please attach additional pages if you need more space)

Please place the recommendation letter in an envelope and sign your name across the envelope seal. Thank you.
John Walls
October 5, 1989 to May 8, 2009

Favorite Quote, “Obstacles are what you see when you take your eyes off the goal”.

John played Wilsonville Youth Sports (WYS) football from 4th grade through 8th grade, including four straight Championship games. The picture above is his 8th grade year; the last season he would play football. John loved football. He played basketball, baseball, and wrestled; but football was his passion. It was the sport that helped him get through a very difficult time in his life.

John was diagnosed with a rare form of Acute Myelogenous Leukemia (AML) on May 4, 2004. He was 14 years old and in the 8th grade. The day before he was diagnosed, John volunteered at the annual Wilsonville Youth Sports Pancake Breakfast and played in a Wilsonville Youth Baseball tournament. He wasn’t feeling well but knew it was important to follow through with his commitments. He didn’t want to let the community or his teammates down. When the doctors diagnosed him on Monday, he was immediately admitted to Doernbecher Children’s Hospital due to advanced stage of his illness; the doctors spent the next five weeks trying to save his life. They were surprised John felt well enough to do anything prior to be admitted. It was a testament to John’s willpower and it would be tested many more times during his cancer journey.

John endured a difficult six month regimen of inpatient chemotherapy. He was able to receive hospital passes from the doctors to go to Friday night high school football games and run the clock and to be a WYS referee for youth football games on Saturday mornings. The doctors had never given a patient a pass to go to a football game or to referee. They knew how important it was to John (and he was a bit persistent). His #44 football jersey was always hanging on the wall in his hospital room except on Friday game days…on those days, he was wearing the jersey waiting anxiously to get his pass to go watch Wildcat football.

The following spring, John was in remission. He worked-out diligently to get ready for his sophomore year of football. He was finally back on the field and played in a football scrimmage on June 17, 2005. He was on cloud nine and feeling good. John wrote, “I have a new life now with more things to worry about and more appreciation for life. Sports are back in my life and I am a better person from my journey. I love life and I enjoy the company of friends and people. Though I now hate the hospital; I have a new found respect for it too. I have a respect for people and life. I also believe the body is an amazing machine that can adapt to overcome almost any obstacle. My life is better than ever before and I love it.” He had no bitterness for his cancer journey. John looked forward to jumping back into life.
Unfortunately, prior to the scrimmage, his parents were informed his leukemia had returned. The best day of his life quickly became one of his worst. He would need a bone marrow transplant, which would require harsh chemotherapy and full body radiation. The doctors were very clear a bone marrow transplant probably meant the end of playing football. John had already signed up for a Linfield College football camp and he convinced the doctors that he could participate. Rather than feeling sorry for himself, John was determined to make the best out of a bad situation. He wasn’t going to miss out on possibly the last time he would be in a helmet and pads.

John received a bone marrow transplant on August 16, 2005. He was out of the hospital in 22 days, which is incredibly fast. Despite the terrible side effects of the bone marrow transplant, he refereed his first Saturday home. In addition to not feeling well, his physical appearance change dramatically from the high-dosage steroids. He was embarrassed about the way he looked, but that was not enough to keep him off the field.

John was not able to attend high school during his sophomore year. He kept up with his studies with tutors. As determined as he was to play football, he was determined he would graduate with his class. The radiation negatively affected his learning abilities but he adapted. He went from excelling in math to struggling. He had to work harder to learn.

John was able to participate in football practice for two weeks during his junior year, but he started to have intense hip pain and couldn’t continue. He would continue to referee football games, at times on crutches. John had to have both hips replaced. The hip replacements effectively ended any chance he had to get back on the football field as a player, however, John was determined to referee his senior year with two new hips and he did.

John did everything he could to get on the football field, and when he couldn’t get there in shoulder pads and a helmet, he did it in the black and white stripes as a referee. John distinguished himself as a referee in the Tualatin Valley Youth Football League and even though he had to endure intense pain in his hips, he insisted on finishing what he started. Sometimes John couldn’t power through the pain, and on those days he operated the game clock…staying involved in the athletic love of his life, football.

John wrote, “I had both hips replaced because the medicines I was given to save my life stopped the blood flow to my hips. I’ve had to refocus my interests. I will never run again so there goes my dream of playing college football. I’ve learned to overcome obstacles and change my focus. The experience has given me a life with an appreciation of the small things. I have not given up my dream of attending college. I will graduate with my class this June and start Oregon State University next fall.”

Unfortunately, John never made it to college. When his leukemia came back a third time, there wasn’t much the doctors could do to bring John back to health. John chose to live the rest of his life to the fullest. He did not feel sorry for himself. John passed away on May 8, 2009 with a smile on his face.

In the spring of John’s senior year, Wilsonville High School retired the #44 jersey. Even though John never played for the high school, they honored John’s passion for the sport. During his freshman year, the players wore #44 on the front of their helmets to honor John going forward. His teammates would come out of the tunnel, holding a #44 jersey in front of them. The coaches would make sure John had a varsity #44 jersey every year so he could be on the sidelines when he felt good enough. He was always part of the team. After he passed, the #44 on was on the helmets until his brother, Andrew, graduated from high school. Wilsonville High School allowed John’s memorial service to be held at Randall stadium on the football field.

John was family oriented and treated friends like family. He was willing to help out anyone who needed it. He was a pleasure to be around and relentless in his love for the game of tackle football. He believed in giving to the community and the community gave back with tremendous support during his journey. John was only able to play youth football and what an incredible impact that was. Football helped him keep his drive to stay alive in the worst moments of his treatment. It gave him the strength to keep fighting cancer, to get his torn up body back into shape which made his body stronger for the next cancer battle he had to face. John never gave up in his five year cancer battle. Toward the end of John’s life, he knew that he did everything he could and he had lived his life to the fullest. He had asked that no one be sad when he passed. He wanted people to celebrate the life he had lived.