

# Soroptimist honor 4 STHS young women

***Publisher's note: Soroptimist International South Lake Tahoe on Jan. 23 recognized four Young Women of Distinction from South Tahoe High School The following are comments that Principal Ivone Larson said at the noon lunch at Harrah's Tahoe about Kate Albrecht, Emily Barnett, Bailey David and Janelle Spandau-Buts.***

**By Ivone Larson**

**Katherine Albrecht**

Some day, it is the dream of this young woman to have a career focused on her passion, photographing nature. Although Kate Albrecht has enjoyed and done well in school, it wasn't until she took the digital photography course that she realized her talents behind the camera lens.



She has applied to several schools, but her top choice is the University of Utah where she hopes to major in art with a photography concentration.

In addition to being a shutterbug, Kate also enjoys listening to music and watching movies.

Even with a GPA of 4.0, Kate is involved in numerous activities. Along with her best friend, she is the co-editor of the South Tahoe High School yearbook. She has been a Girl Scout for 10 years, receiving both the Bronze and Silver Award and is just a few steps away from receiving her Gold Award, the highest award a Girl Scout can earn.

She actively participates in several sports, including cross country running, which she began in the sixth grade; track,

(before) she switched to swimming in her junior year; and Nordic skiing, which she has done every single year since sixth grade and was awarded the Athlete of the Season.

As a result of her membership with the National Honor Society and the Girl Scouts, community service has become an integral part of her life. Kate was the recipient of the Violet Richardson Award for her service project titled "Chemo Buddies", which delivers teddy bears to children getting chemotherapy treatment at the Stanford University Children's Hospital.

Kate has had three significant life changing events, all of which have one element in common, cancer. In her sophomore year, her step-grandmother died of cancer, and later that winter, her PE teacher and Nordic coach, Scott Hudson, lost his fight with cancer. The following year, as a junior, Kate was diagnosed with cancer. Everything in her life changed as she underwent treatment and started on her path to recovery. Although most of her life has returned to a level of "normalcy," her outlook on life has changed forever. As she battled cancer, Scott Hudson's example continued to provide her inspiration and strength. And through it all, she had the love and support of her parents and family who were and are always there for her. Her new outlook focuses on appreciating the little things in life.

Todd McIntyre, coach and teacher at STHS said of her, "I have had the privilege of knowing Kate Albrecht for 15 years. She has excelled as a student athlete competing in cross country running, cross country skiing, track and swimming. She is an outstanding student, well liked by faculty and peers alike. Last year Kate was diagnosed with cancer and bravely fought and defeated the disease. She serves as an excellent role model for all students who wish to succeed at a high level."

Kate, your strength, your grace and your perseverance are your gifts to us. Keep doing what you are doing and keep sharing

your views of our world through the lens of your camera. Like you, we all need to learn to appreciate the wondrous little things life has to share.”

## **Emily Barnett**

When asked about her interests and hobbies, this young woman enthusiastically answered that she had spent the last two summers working with the Forest Service in aquatics and botany. Her love of the outdoors has lead Emily on a path to pursue the study of science at Humboldt State University and hopes to be working in the environmental field in 10 years with all her debts from college paid off ... quite the lofty goal.

Emily is no ordinary student. She has been on the honor roll in grades 4-8, received the Soroptimist Award in eighth grade, received the Spirit of Saint Theresa's Award, ran JV cross country, and received various sports awards including varsity letters in volleyball and Nordic ski. As an active member of the Generation Green Club at South Tahoe High School, she served as vice president, and has served as a volunteer with the U.S. Forest Service.

Even with all this recognition, it wasn't until Emily, working with her friend and colleague Tyler Myers, became recognized nationally and internationally in the scientific community. The two worked together under the guidance and support of Joy Barney, a conservation education specialist, and Hugh Safford, a regional ecologist with the U.S. Forest Service. Their research project titled, “The Effects of Fire and Forest Thinning on the Biodiversity of Understory Plants in the Lake Tahoe Basin,” won third prize amongst 52 projects presented by students from around the world. This was the first time the United States had representation in this international competition and dialogue concerning forestry issues. The students were honored during a concert celebrating “Day of the Forest Worker” in Moscow, during which the host and head of

the Russian Federal Forestry Agency, V.N. Maslyakov, presented their prizes. What an amazing accomplishment for a young woman from South Lake Tahoe.

Thanks to the tremendous support systems, Emily has been able to achieve at the highest levels. She graciously recognizes her parents, her friends, especially those who run cross country with her, and Ms. Luquin for being influential, supporting her endeavors, and encouraging her to succeed in all she does.

Joy Barney, mentor, guide and U.S. Forest Service liaison to South Tahoe High School said, "Through Emily's dedication and quiet leadership over the past two years, the Generation Green program of South Tahoe High School has flourished and exceeded all expectations. Emily is reliable, consistent, has an excellent work ethic and is willing to go the extra mile in everything she does. Her work as the first delegation to enter the Russian Junior Forestry Competition brought national and international accolades to both herself and to South Tahoe High School."

At such a young age, Emily has already achieved what others only dare to dream. I am sure all will agree that this girl truly is on fire.

### **Janelle Spandau-Buts**

Janelle Spandau-Buts names math as her favorite subject, having aced calculus AB and BC in her Junior year, although recently art has become her favorite, as it is relaxing and allows her imagination to flow. With so many talents, selecting a career path can be challenging, but one thing she knows for sure is that wherever life takes her, she wants to make sure it's outdoors.

She is giving serious consideration toward a career in environmental science, like her sister Kelsi who is studying at UC Santa Barbara, however she has decided to pursue her

higher education at either UCLA or UC Berkeley.

Janelle is very involved in school and athletics, having participated in cross country running, soccer, Nordic ski, track, swim, and the National Honor Society all while maintaining an amazing 4.5 GPA. She has received varsity letters in Nordic skiing and soccer having competed at state. Along with receiving academic awards for her straight A's, she was nominated for RYLA Camp and Girls State.

So, what is it that makes Janelle excel? In two words: attitude and support. She is always positive, and when something does get her down, she looks on the bright side and stays happy. But she has always had a strong support system. She grew up in an environment where her parents were open to let follow her interests, and never got down on her. Her older sister was a great role model and friend. Even her dog Lucy is there for her on weekends and joins Janelle and her dad on cross country ski escapades.

Melissa Berry, STHS coach and teacher states: "Janelle is a young woman who is passionate and driven in both her academics and sports. She has the unique quality of being a fierce competitor while possessing a grace and kindness that draws others to her for support."

With all the issues facing our environment, it is comforting to know that there are bright and multi-talented young women like Janelle taking on these problems and looking towards finding solutions. Janelle, we know that an investment in you will bring returns to our global environment tenfold.

## **Bailey David**

This young woman proudly states, "My family is my best friend." Bailey David says her mom, her dad, and her younger brother are always there for her, challenging her to do her best. Her nana and her grandpa support her in all her sports and her schooling. She gleefully attributes her family in

becoming the person that she is today.

In addition to maintaining a 4.1 GPA, Bailey enjoys all sports, staying active and being outdoors. She is captain for volleyball, softball, and basketball and is secretary of the Associated Student Body. She has received numerous awards including first team all league for basketball, second team all league twice for volleyball, honorable mention for softball, selected for the NFL Wharton Prep Leadership Program and she was selected for RYLA where she spent a week in Portola focusing on leadership through self-discovery, an “eye-opening” journey.

Bailey’s favorite subject is AP biology because she enjoys learning about how the human body and other species function. After an injury to her ankle, she met Angie, the PT angel who inspired her to pursue a career path in sports medicine. As a result, she plans to either attend Long Beach State to major in kinesiology or attend UC Santa Barbara and major in biology.

Coach Kevin Hennessee, and Bailey’s weight training teacher states, “Bailey David is by far one of the hardest working, selfless student athletes I have had the privilege to be around. She is intelligent and always finds opportunities in challenges. She is a communicator that is truly genuine, which is a quality very hard to find. She is someone who will be achieving amazing things as she progresses through life.”

With her exuberance and enthusiasm, we have no doubt that Bailey will be an outstanding physical therapist or Sports Trainer, and hope that someday she returns to South Lake Tahoe to share her talents with others in our new Sports Medicine Center at South Tahoe High.

