

SPORTS / HIGH SCHOOL

Commack's Katherine Kelly, Newfield's Loui Chen earn Butch Dellecave Award



Loui Chen of Newfield and Katherine Kelly of Commack are the Butch Dellecave Award winners for 2019 Suffolk's top scholar athletes. Photo Credit: Christine Heeren

By Gregg Sarra

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Katherine Kelly put together quite the impressive resume as she prepared to close out her senior year at Commack.

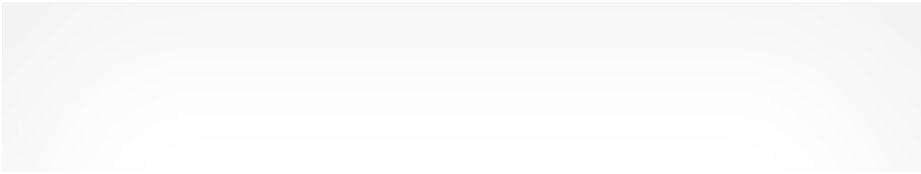
A three-sport dynamo and captain in soccer, basketball and lacrosse, she also spent endless hours doing community service and held a 101 weighted average to earn the Butch Dellecave Award given to Suffolk's top scholar-athletes Sunday at Villa Lombardi's in Holbrook.

Kelly joined Newfield's Loui Chen as the winners of the 19th annual Butch Dellecave Awards. Chen earned the distinction for his music and artistic achievements balanced with his ability to stand out in fencing and soccer. Oh, and this: Chen, the school's valedictorian, will attend Yale University.

The Dellecave Award is presented to a male and a female student-athlete who has athletic prowess, demonstrates excellence in the classroom and contributes within the community.

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“It’s a very prestigious award,” Kelly said. “It’s a nice way to end my high school career. I want to thank my parents for being with me every step of the way. And a big thank you to my coaches and Mr. [Patrick] Friel, our athletic director, for all their support.”

Kelly, a high honor roll student and Business Honor Society president, thrived in all three sports for Commack and will play for the Hofstra women’s lacrosse team next winter. Her volunteer work includes team captain for the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life and student body liaison for the Sounds of Silence 5k/10k run/walk.

“She’s as tenacious as they come,” Friel said. “We’re so proud of her and all that she’s accomplished. She’s not the biggest kid on the field but she plays bigger than most of her opponents.”

The other female finalists were Brittany Walker of Greenport, Brooke Cergol of Mount Sinai, Kailyn Hart of North Babylon and Kayla Kielbasa of Riverhead. The five finalists were selected from a list of 57 nominations submitted to the Economic Opportunity Council of Suffolk.

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Kelly discussed how gratifying it is to be recognized for her combination of educational success and volunteer service as a student-athlete.

“All I did in school and my community service was out of my own heart and drive,” Kelly said. “It’s such an honor and a tribute to all the success I’ve had over these last four years.”

Chen, a Newfield fencing and soccer captain, excelled in the classroom, finishing as the class valedictorian and ready for his next challenge at Yale. In his senior year, he participated in a pre-college program at Stony Brook in which he performed on the piano and learned about music theory.

He also volunteered at Stony Brook Hospital and tutored other Newfield students.

“I want to thank my parents for all they’ve done for me,” Chen said. “It’s a really big honor because of all the hard work it takes to balance everything. I’m excited about the next chapter in my life.”

The other boys finalists were Jackson Bright of Copiague, Joseph Slackman of Commack, Greg Campisi of St. Anthony’s, Liam McIntyre of Westhampton Beach and Adam Busiello of Eastport-South Manor.

The two winners receive a \$1,000 scholarship from the Dellecave family toward their education. The award is named after Butch Dellecave, who served as an educator in the Connetquot school district for 30 years and was a highly regarded high school basketball official and one of the founding members of the Suffolk Sports Hall of Fame.

“Every year we host the best of the best in Suffolk’s student-athletes,” said Butch Dellecave’s son, Guy. “And it’s amazing to read about all of the accolades from all of the nominees. There are so many student-athletes out there doing it all in school, on the fields and in the communities. And they’ve learned to balance their schedules to accomplish so much.”



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