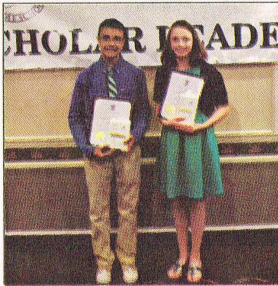


Pair of Feinstein students earns state awards

Brandon Gramajo and Theresa Barden named RI leaders



Submitted photo • Courtesy Dr. Arthur Lisi

Feinstein students Brandon Gramajo (left) and Theresa Barden at the award ceremony.

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COVENTRY — Two Feinstein Middle School students — Brandon Gramajo and Theresa Barden — have been named Rhode Island Scholar Leader award winners for 2015.

This award is co-sponsored by the New England League of Middle Schools (NELMS) and the Rhode Island Middle Level Educators (RIMLE).

The selection process involved teachers from all of the school's eighth-grade teams, and they looked at several criteria, including having an excellent attitude towards learning, providing service to others,

being a positive role model for peers, and taking responsibility for one's own behavior and learning.

According to a press release from Feinstein Middle School Principal Dr. Arthur Lisi, Gramajo exemplifies the characteristics of a responsible, reliable and respectful young man. He maintains balance between his responsibilities as a student, an athlete and a citizen.

"In the classroom, he is self-directed and motivated and has a positive and inquisitive attitude towards learning," Lisi said. "He consistently sets goals in order to push himself and master the content. He is a leader in the classroom and provides extra help and assistance to peers in small group set-

tings."

In addition to his excellence in the classroom, Gramajo was a three-year member of the middle school boys' soccer team.

On the field, he is a positive leader and gives back to the community by providing services to the town's recreational soccer program as a referee.

"He is a wonderful young man with tremendous integrity," Lisi added.

"It's an honor," Gramajo said. "It's nice having an opportunity to learn because not everyone has that chance."

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Feinstein duo wins awards

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Math is his favorite subject.

"I like the feeling of being able to solve a problem," he said. "When I help others, I like knowing I can make a difference and I get great support from my parents and my teachers."

One of his teachers, Justin Howman, said he's a great kid.

"He's one of those kids that make classes better," Howman said. "He looks for a challenge and knows how to balance his responsibilities."

Barden said she's very excited for the honor.

"When I see other students struggling, I see it as my job and I love to learn new things," she said. "Science is my favorite subject and I get so much support from teachers and my mother. She always gives me the best advice."

"Barden shows leadership qualities in so many situations in our school, both on team and in her band and semester classes," Lisi said.

"She is a strong contributor to class and she is an important force when the team looks at group leadership," Lisi added. "She always takes initiative in learning. She is a self-directed learner who takes her time and always produces quality

work. In fact, she often goes above and beyond in completing additional research on topics being covered."

In addition, Barden consistently volunteers and is gladly available and willing to sacrifice her own time to offer assistance to others.

For example, she often volunteers at her church and provides free tutoring to other students during the summer.

Recently, she worked with her science teacher to run a Science Night at a local elementary school where she researched topics, created poster boards for various stations, organized materials and helped to set up. While there, she sat with small groups of students and shared her love for science by asking questions and taking them through a hands-on task.

"Barden exemplifies a positive attitude and inspires positive behaviors in others," said the principal. "She continues to exceed our expectations not only academically but in the areas of respect and responsibility. She is a delightful young lady with tremendous integrity and we are proud to name her Feinstein Middle School's Female Student Leader for 2015."