

Honor roll student Emma Ayala stars for the Hall Wolfpack in flag football, volleyball, and ultimate frisbee]

Caledon Citizen Student-Athlete of the Week

By Jim Stewart

When Robert F. Hall Science and Physical Education teacher Andrea Czyrka nominated tri-sport athlete Emma Ayala as The Caledon Citizen's Student-Athlete of the Week, she compiled a lengthy list of academic and co-curricular achievements.

Firstly, Coach Czyrka was impressed by Ayala's performance on the football field, volleyball court, and Ultimate Frisbee pitch. She noted that the talented Grade 12 athlete played defence and offence while captaining the Wolfpack's Flag-Football team in the Fall, was the captain of the Volleyball team over the winter, and earned the top female athlete on the co-ed Frisbee team in the spring of 2022.

Secondly, in addition to Ayala's high school sports achievements, it was disclosed that she played U18 rep soccer with the Orangeville Soccer Club and performed as a competitive dancer with certification in ballet.

Thirdly, Ayala's shining performances in high school and community sports were complemented by excellence in the classroom.

The Honor Roll student at Hall CSS has accrued over a 90% average during her seven semesters of high school and aspires to study kinesiology in order to be a doctor.

Coach Czyrka believes that what makes Ayala such an exceptional multiple sport athlete and excellent student is that she is "very hard-working and dedicated to sport with outstanding levels of commitment and work ethic."

The Robert F Hall CSS teacher-coach is also impressed with "Emma's involvement in many extracurricular sports and is academically driven in the classroom to be an Honor Roll student."

But what impresses Coach Czyrka the most about this week's Student Athlete of the Week is that "Emma's determination and drive/desire to succeed is unmatched. She is competitive and strives to excel and not disappoint or let her team down. Emma is a leader both on and off the field."

Emma Ayala took time from her productive academic and co-curricular life to answer our interview questions:

The Caledon Citizen: What qualities did you demonstrate in your sports season to earn Student-Athlete of the Week honors?

Emma Ayala: Some qualities I demonstrated throughout the fall season are leadership, hard work, and responsibility to earn Student-Athlete of the Week honors. My coaches gave me the responsibility of being one of the captains of the flag football team this season. My goal was to always put my best effort into both practices and games and I always worked hard for a positive outcome.

The Caledon Citizen: What were your key statistics and performance moments from the 2022-23 season that you are most proud of?

Emma Ayala: Throughout the fall season, I helped my team in scoring the touchdowns that brought us to the quarter-finals. During a game, I made a lateral pass out to one of my teammates which resulted in her getting a touchdown and I am proud of the decision I made at that moment. I am also happy with the number of interceptions I made this season. The last game I played for the Robert F. Hall flag football team was probably the best I played since I started the sport in Grade 9. I am happy with how far I have come.

The Caledon Citizen: In addition to your high school sports team(s), what other community teams do you play for and at what

level?

Emma Ayala: I have played soccer for the last 15 years and am currently a team member on the U18 rep soccer team at the Orangeville Soccer Club. During the year, we attend various tournaments in Canada and the USA, as well as play weekly games in the winter and summer seasons. I am also a competitive dancer and have completed my advanced I ballet exam.

The Caledon Citizen: How would you describe yourself as a student at Robert F Hall? To which sports teams and clubs do you belong?

Emma Ayala: I am a hard-working student and athlete. I have achieved honor roll every semester during my years of high school with an average of over 90 percent while also participating in a sport every season that school extra-curriculars were running. Throughout the four years, I have been a part of flag football, volleyball, and ultimate frisbee teams. I play wide receiver offence and either safety or cornerback on defence for the flag football team. I am the setter on the volleyball team. I had the opportunity to lead both the flag football and volleyball teams as one of the captains this year. Last year, I was awarded the female athlete award for the ultimate frisbee team as well. I also volunteered for both Mindfulness Matters and The Pack ? both mentoring programs for the Grade 9s that came in this year.

The Caledon Citizen: What are your post-secondary plans regarding prospective academic/athletic destinations?

Emma Ayala: My plan for post-secondary is to go to one of the three universities I have applied to: McMaster University, University of Toronto, and University of Guelph. My top choice is to go to McMaster University for their kinesiology program and hopefully after four years get into a school of medicine to become a doctor. In accordance with athletics, I would like to either continue with the sports I am a part of for fun, or try out for one of the many teams offered at the university I get accepted to.

The Caledon Citizen: Who is your role model in terms of the person you admire the most?

Emma Ayala: The person I admire most is my older sister, Seleste Ayala. She is an amazing athlete as well as a hard-working student. She ended up winning the athletic leadership award at the end of her high school year which I hope to achieve as well. She was also featured twice in The Caledon Citizen athlete of the week article. She is now working towards becoming a veterinarian. I want to be as driven as she is as I get older.

The Caledon Citizen: How do you feel about being nominated as The Caledon Citizen's Student-Athlete of the Week?

Emma Ayala: It was very exciting to hear that I am nominated for the Caledon Citizen's Student-Athlete of the week. I remember my sister getting nominated and now I am too. I am happy to be following in her footsteps.

If you are a community or high school coach who would like to nominate a Caledon-based student-athlete for The Caledon Citizen's Student Athlete of the Week, please email me at jim@lpcmedia.ca.