

# NANTUCKET GOLF CLUB SCHOLAR FINALISTS 2020

## LULY DAY

Our first finalist is the youngest of 3. She looks up to her older siblings, but also wants to do things her own way. She shared that her mother has shown her strength and grace; her sister has taught her how to forgive and her brother is her model of humbleness and good nature. A recurring theme in this finalist's interviews was her admiration for her mom: She credits her mom's "Britishness" for contributing to her own personality and what makes her who she is today.



This finalist is described as loyal, hard-working, straightforward, and honest. One of her recommendations shared "this finalist is strong, mature and generous with her time and talents." This is evident in her being a three sport athlete, in her work as an intern at the Harvey foundation and through her work with Veritas as a contributing writer. She enjoys travelling and meeting new people. One committee member beautifully captured this finalist when she said she clearly uses writing, journalism and literature as a window to continue her thirst for knowledge. This finalist reminded us in one of her interviews to "seize the day," something the Committee is assured she will continue to do in her future.

## ANJELIE DHJAR

Our next finalist said her mother taught her to always ask questions, which is a motto she still lives by. It has served her well as she is the only Nantucket achieved a perfect score on the ACT Commended Student, Mr. Cozort Massachusetts Superintendents student. It should come as no surprise her as "the most academically gifted teaching career." In athletics she is a player. She also enjoys photography. Review Committee noted I can tell this everyone always has the kindest things committee member shared this finalist intelligence, her love of science and learn will undoubtedly benefit all of our the Committee that she hopes to one revolutionary, which we have no doubt



High School student I know who exam. A National Merit Scholar recognized her as a Certificate of Excellence that one of her teachers describes student I have encountered in my talented golfer and softball One of the members of the finalist is a good friend, as to say about her. Another is gifted with a quiet but fierce determination to continue to futures. This finalist shared with day discover something she will.

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## VICTORIA DIXON

Education has always been important to our next finalist. She works hard for all that she has accomplished, which is a lot, including having the highest GPA of any scholar in recent memory, being a National Merit Scholar Commended student and earning a near perfect score on her SAT verbal test. Another finalist once said, "she really knows her plastics!" which speaks volumes to her dedication to protecting our environment and living sustainably. It should come as no surprise that she earned first place in our Science Fair. Her environmental science teacher, Ms. Erisman said "students with her level of dedication don't come around often". Her talent in art and dedication to service is equally as commendable. She is a weaving instructor for Lightship Basket Museum in addition to being a counselor and choir vocalist in Summer Street Church. In service, she participated in Duke Youth Academy for Christian Formation and went on service trips to Costa Rica and West Virginia. This finalist has worked hard to push herself out of her comfort zone and become more social. When asked what the title to a movie about her life would be, she said "Finding my place in the world." We are confident that it will be a very successful place.



## ANITA DOUGAN

Our next finalist is passionate about environmental issues. She credits her Advanced Placement Environmental Science course for being a game changer for her in her high school career. She shared this course changed her thinking to sustainability and maintaining the planet for the future and now hopes one day to invent something to prevent coral bleaching. She impressed the Committee when she shared “Life isn’t about the big,



beautiful house on the hill with a white picket fence and a picturesque garden, it’s about the people we’re surrounded with and the memories we share.” This finalist is captain on the volleyball team and has made great friendships and memories as a member of this team in addition to being an instrumental force in its launch and expansion as a competitive interscholastic team for Nantucket. A talented singer and dancer, this finalist is a member of the Accidentals, appearing in the musicals and as a dancer in Nantucket Ballet’s *The Nutcracker* and *Peter and the Wolf*. The Committee was amused when this finalist was asked about the last person she had to apologize to and without pause said “my sister.” Spoiler alert, she is a twin. If she were to create a slogan for her life it would be “failure is a part of success.” Her strength of character will lead her far.

## TESSA DOUGAN

A game-changer for this finalist was taking a dual-enrollment class offered by CCCC. The class was about critical thinking and it helped to open her eyes to others views and understand thoughts that were different from hers. She is a strong athlete - fierce on the volleyball court and also instrumental in the beginning and rapid growth of Volleyball as a varsity sport at Nantucket High School. She is a leader to her teammates. This finalist shared she is eager to take challenges no one else would imagine tackling. It makes sense then if she were to create a slogan for her life she said “make as many mistakes as possible” so that you can find your strengths and not hold back. In his recommendation for this member of the Latin Club, Mr. Cothran said of this finalist “she is a model student with a strong moral compass.” This year she stepped outside her comfort zone to join the musical cast of *Mary Poppins* and really enjoyed it! This finalist, like the previous finalist, made the committee laugh when asked the last person she had to apologize to also shared without pause, “my sister.” This finalist is captivated by photography. She shared with the Committee that she loves finding the unusual angles of life and capturing them in her photos. It stands to reason if she were to be famous for anything, she would like to be a National Geographic photojournalist. One thing is for sure, we know the picture of her future will be equally as brilliant and captivating.





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## FREYJA FEENEY

Our next finalist consistently surprised the Committee with her thoughts on science and research. She always seemed to have the insider information on the latest medical research or breakthroughs. One committee member said this finalist knows more about Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Reality than anyone she knows! It should come as no surprise that she feels a game changer for her was Advanced Placement Biology with Ms MacDonald. This finalist reflected that course shifted the foundation of what she believed in and believed possible. She is also a self-proclaimed environmentalist who changed her lifestyle drastically after learning of all the damage we are doing to our world in her Advanced Placement Environmental Science course. In addition to being a scholar she is an artist in both the visual - painting and drawing - and martial arts, practicing Baguazhang. She is also a musician, instrumental playing the piano and vocal having sung with a youth choir with the Boston Pops. She touched the Committee when she shared "I find myself turning to the piano when the words won't come out; the ticking of the metronome never fails to drown out the sound of the clock." One of her recommendations said "there is a wisdom and calmness about her." She has such a gentle way about her that forces you to slow down, relax and just listen to what she has to say. This finalist reminded us to "listen and understand before you speak, because all of your words will somehow have an impact." We are confident that the words from this finalist will have a tremendous impact on the future.



## MATTHEW GIACCHETTI

Our next finalist is as unique as he is talented and multifaceted. Every time we thought we had really gotten to know him, we would find one more thing that he is good at! With interests ranging from film making, to fighting the opioid epidemic, to trampolining, to diving, to photography, he made us want to go out and find a new hobby! He is one of the top 50 freestyle trampoline athletes in the country and 19th in the world in 2019. He took that talent to the diving team for NHS and placed second in the state. In terms of his artistic talents he directed, filmed and edited two short films for the Nantucket Film Festival. He was also named the Junior Mister. His response that the unsung heroes of our country are our teachers and he has learned more non-academic things from teachers than from anyone else resonated with Ms. Hickson. This finalist amused the committee with his



hopes for the future when he shared he hopes to be known for photojournalism one day and not "the weird kid who moved here in ninth grade and did trampoline." He is consistently described as hard-working and someone who does not give up! This finalist shared with the Committee if he were to create a slogan for his life it would be to "be phenomenal or be forgotten!" We have no doubt he will always be phenomenal and never forgotten.

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**SKYLAR KARDELL**

Our next finalist is an accomplished ornithologist who amazed and inspired the Committee with his tales from his expeditions on Tuckernuck and Muskeget. He has volunteered on Nantucket and Tuckernuck for five years with the Christmas bird counts. He got a chuckle during an interview when he described himself as a “jerk”, then quickly clarified that’s “soda jerk” as he has worked at the pharmacy throughout his high school years. A member of Quiz Bowl, this finalist proved a worthy opponent against the School Committee although we’re not sure Dr. Lepore would concede such an acknowledgment. Regarding the planet and sustainability, this finalist wowed the committee with his deeply mature acknowledgement that “we live in a nihilistic culture and we are the throwaway generation but we need to wake up before we destroy our planet.” A thespian, this finalist has taken the stage in both the musicals and drama productions. He is a writer for Veritas and also an editor. He encourages us all to experience nature, and truly immerse ourselves in it! He amused the Committee again when he shared if his life were made into a movie it would be “a low budget documentary entitled ‘Life with the Birds with Asa Butterfield in his title role. This finalist has a tremendous vocabulary and was truly impressive and enjoyable to converse with in interviews. Mr. Cozort described this finalist as profoundly reflective and a true intellectual. We are confident this reflection and intellect will serve him well in the future.

## **BRIANNA LEVEILLE**

Our next finalist was born on Nantucket but is proud of her Haitian heritage. She tries to live her mother’s words to “give back to the community that has blessed you.” She is passionate about helping to make those around her feel happy and comfortable. Whether it is one of the many elementary students that she has been mentoring for years through Breakfast Buddies or a high school peer, she always has others on her mind. This benevolence is no more apparent than in the fact she has completed over 200 hours of community service! She is VP of the Class and co-founder of the Four-Square Club. She has made many self-discoveries throughout her high school career. Inspired by a summer medical program she attended at Tufts, this finalist wants to go into plastic surgery. A member of the review committee has volunteered to be her first pro bono case. She said her life’s motto would be “be yourself, because everyone else is taken!” She is an artist and a musician who plays the violin. She is a Girl Scout who impressed the committee with her assertion that she wants to represent all the good the island has to offer. We feel she does. A review committee member said this finalist has a commanding presence, is bursting at the seams with an obvious zest for life and learning! One of her peers beautifully described this finalist as someone who lights her world. We are confident she will continue to be a light in the world.



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## JOEL MACVICAR

Our next finalist is a Nantucket native who credits the community for making him into the person that he is. He is passionate about sports, his **family**, drug prevention in school and making Nantucket a better place for future generations. A three sport athlete, captain and leader of his peers, he also coaches and referees youth sports. As a leader he is on the student council and serves as the student representative to the school committee. This finalist is described by one committee member as being “like a Renaissance Man” for his broad array of interests and talents-academic, leadership, service and music, including being in the NHS band as well as lead guitarist in Shifting Tides Jam band. Another committee member described this finalist as the type of friend anyone would love to have. He is loyal, fair and honest. One of his recommendations described this finalist as someone who can be depended on to take just and moral action whether or not others are watching. He is a talented writer whose personal essay “A Life in his Day” written in the style of John Steinbeck truly moved several members of the review committee. This finalist cites Coach Vaugh Machado for being a game changer for him in high school who encouraged him to never settle for less. He is a truly a well-rounded young man who will no doubt show great success in the future. If he

were to develop a slogan for his life it would be “hard work pays off.” It is clear his hard work has certainly paid off and we are confident that he will continue to reap rich benefits in the future by adhering to this personal mantra.

## PHAEDRA PLANK

Our next finalist says she owes a debt of gratitude to her parents for sacrificing so much to allow her to explore her education. She touched the committee with her essay where she reflected on how each member of her family shaped her development. This finalist concedes that her biggest issue is that she loves too many things: running, reading, sailing, writing, poetry, acting, story telling. To say she is well-rounded would be an understatement! An athlete, she is the captain of both the Cross Country and Sailing teams. An academic she achieved a near perfect score on her SAT reading/writing exam, is president of the National Honor Society and has been a 3 time state finalist in Massachusetts Poetry Out Loud competition. As a musician, she plays the ukulele, piano and guitar. She is also a street performer on island who amused the committee when she shared in doing so she is strengthening both her voice and her skin. This finalist is kind, genuine and has a real investment in the island. She always has a positive attitude toward whatever she is doing. She loves to experience new adventures, loves to travel and learn about other cultures. She has a love for the environment and sustainability and did scallop research work with Maria Mitchell even though she has always considered herself more a literature and humanities person. Her life slogan is to explore new things. We know she will and will probably be credited for discovering new things along the way.





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## ALECSANDER VOLLANS

Last but certainly not the least, our final finalist is described as mature beyond his years. One of the review committee members described speaking with this finalist as like conversing with an old friend. He is able to express his feelings and thoughts clearly and poignantly. If he were to compare himself to an animal, it would be a sloth...not because he is lazy, but because he is slow and methodical. He has a love for literature and writing which surprised him because he always thought he was a science guy. He is an avid reader who explains that he loves to explore books and enjoys that books let his brain run free! He is an accomplished guitar player and musician, including being in the musicals. He has played at weddings and benefit shows around the island, which are an acknowledgment of his talent. A member of the technology, math and Latin Clubs, he has participated in two World Challenge Expedition trips to Iceland and Tanzania, which he described as life changing. He takes great pride in the fact they built a school. This finalist shared that he is in love with history so his desire to become an archaeologist is natural. Having traveled with him to Italy with the Latin Club I saw first-hand this passion for history and his scholarship of the Classical world. All of his teachers describe this finalist as a pleasure to have in class. Clearly, his belief that simple, effortless acts of kindness can make another's day, has served him well and will continue to benefit him in the future.