

STATE CHAMPION WRESTLER TO STUDY POLITICAL SCIENCE IN NATION'S CAPITOL

ASB grad is recipient of top student-athlete award, scholarship

BY LOYD MCINTOSH
Daily Home correspondent

Alabama School For The Blind alumnus Daymon Winfrey has been awarded the Larry Striplin Jr. Scholar-Athlete Award, the top recognition given to student-athletes in the Alabama High School Association's Bryant-Jordan Scholarship Program.

A 2024 graduate of ASB, Winfrey excelled on the Redskins wrestling team. During his two seasons on the varsity squad, Winfrey compiled a record of 39 wins and six losses and finished the 2023-24 season ranked third in the state in the 141-pound division, according to NCSA sports.org.

Winfrey discovered wrestling in the seventh grade after transferring to ASB. Originally a basketball player, Winfrey decided to give wrestling a try after realizing basketball wasn't offered at ASB at the time. The sport, Winfrey says, provided him

with a balance of teamwork and camaraderie with the solitude and self-reliance necessary to succeed.

"Wrestling is a team sport but it's also an individual sport. You need your team to train and things like that," says Winfrey. "When you're on the mat, it's just you and your opponent. So I think that might be why I like it so much."

While Winfrey was a force to be reckoned with on the wrestling mat, Winfrey he truly shined in the classroom. He earned excellent scores on the ACT in every subject, including 34 in Reading, 32 in Science, and 27 in English and Math.

"According to the ACT, I'm a very good reader, but my favorite subject was always math," Winfrey says.

He was also the 2023-24 ASB valedictorian and will head to Washington D.C. to attend Howard University this fall. The son of Dr. Adia Winfrey, noted psychologist, civic leader, and two-time can-



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didate for U.S. House of Representatives, Daymion plans on studying political science at one of the nation's top HBCUs.

Additionally, the program Howard offered Winfrey will allow him to earn his associate's, bachelor's, and juris doctorate in six years. He says he has no clear idea which career path he will take, but is interested in exploring many areas of law and politics.

"I felt like being in D.C. and being at an accredited HBCU would be a good option for me," says Winfrey. "I did a little bit of research and saw that they had some tools that will be helpful to me and my development. So I decided to take the chance, and they accepted me."

Born with albinism, Winfrey is visually impaired and light-sensitive. He wears special light-blocking contact lenses and reads large print text. And, while he may require some accommodations at Howard, Winfrey has not let his visual disability slow him down.

Throughout his life, he has leaned on his faith in God while also crediting many of the teachers and coaches at ASB for his accomplishments. Winfrey especially cites ASB Wrestling Head Coach Troy Haynes and English teacher Brenda Uptain for inspiring him to achieve great things athletically and academically.

"I like to be led by faith," he says. "They taught me that whatever I wanted to accomplish I could do, no matter how big the goal seemed. They really installed me with the mindset that I could achieve whatever I want."

Winfrey was one of 14 student-athletes among all seven classes in Alabama to win the Larry Striplin Jr. Scholar-Athlete Award, which includes a \$3,500 scholarship. He was also one of the 2024 Bryant-Jordan Scholarship Program winners, awarding a \$3,000 scholarship to each of the 102 regional scholar-athletes for their excellence in athletics and academics.



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