

Three-Sports Star Ella Stepanek Is Stillwater Senior Living Center Female Athlete of the Month For GCHS

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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GRANITE CITY - Granite City's three-sports star Ella Stepanek is the kind of athlete every coach wants to have on their team. She is a three-sports star at Granite City High School in volleyball, basketball, and softball. She is a middle blocker in volleyball and center in basketball.

Ella Stepanek is the Stillwater Senior Living Center Female Athlete of the Month.

Ella has a 5.6 GPA, which is near the top of her class. She said she takes pride of what she has done academically at GCHS.

She says key support behind her has always been her parents, brother and extended family.

"There is something really special about looking up in the stands and seeing all of them rooting for me," she said. "It drives me to work harder even after I feel as though my mistakes outnumber my successes."

Ella's volleyball coaches are Rachel Davis and Assistant Coach Mark Jones. She said her greatest attribute she would say is that she is a hardworking person, and "with the refinement that my coaches have been able to equip me with, I've been able to succeed in sports. I try my hardest to step out on the court and give my coaches the best that I can offer, whether it be during practices or games."

The Granite City volleyball player started playing volleyball as an eighth-grade student at Coolidge Junior High.

"Even though I played other sports growing up, volleyball wasn't something I picked up until later. I loved it right away! I like the immediate validation you receive for earning each point." Ella is always busy, but she has immense pride for both her school and role on the athletic teams.?

"Even though it is challenging to maintain the demands of both sports and school, I think that in doing so it has given me an immense amount of pride in my achievements for both athletics and academics," she said. "I have learned that if I am willing to put the work in, success will eventually follow, and the responsibility that comes with both will be worth it."

Ella has not made a decision on which college she will attend, but said the following about playing sports in college: "If given the opportunity it is something I would definitely consider."

She has been fascinated by science at GCHS and said that chemistry is a field she tremendously enjoys studying.

"With the science program at my high school I look forward to fully exploring the possibilities available in that area of study," she said. "I have yet to narrow myself down to a specific career."

Ella is involved with the Secondary Honors Program, Saturday Scholars, Renaissance, Varsity Club, Hockey Club, Science Club, Student Council and National Honor Society.

“I was selected as Rotary Student of the Month for February 2021 and a participant in Illini Girls State,” she said. She closed by saying, “I’m looking forward to fully enjoying my senior year and all of the things that come along with the culmination of high school.”