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## **STAR Students and Teachers for 2021**

*Cedar Shoals High School STAR Student Named System Winner*

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(ATHENS, GA)- William Fang, Cedar Shoals High School, and Sophie Caillault, Clarke Central High School, have been named 2021 STAR students from the Clarke County School District (CCSD). This week, Fang was announced as the System winner (all public and private high schools in Clarke County).

The STAR (Student Teacher Achievement Recognition) honor is awarded to the senior at each high school with the highest score on any single test date of the SAT and in the top 10 percent of their class based on grade point average. Each STAR Student selects their favorite teacher to be named STAR Teacher. The award is sponsored at the state level by the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE) Foundation and sponsored locally by the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce.

The Athens Chamber of Commerce traditionally recognizes students and teachers at a celebratory luncheon, but that tradition had to be foregone this year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Athens Area Chamber of Commerce presented certificates and gifts to the student winners.

"We are thrilled to honor Clarke County's best and brightest students each year," said David Bradley, President/CEO. "Their hard work and dedication, and the support from their outstanding teachers, provides the framework for their future success. We congratulate them on their accomplishments."

### **Cedar Shoals High School**

CSHS STAR Student William Fang will attend Stanford University, planning to study computer science with a focus on artificial intelligence. At CSHS, William participated in football, soccer, concert band, marching band, math team, Athens Youth Symphony, and was an SAT tutor.

William selected Katie Baker-Johnson as his STAR Teacher.

"Ms. Johnson is the most influential teacher within the walls of Cedar Shoals. Under her guidance, the Peer Leadership program has changed the culture of the school—it has reignited school pride and created a robust support system for incoming freshmen. In my three years of having her as a teacher, I have learned to become empathetic and

invested in my community. Mrs. Johnson has truly changed countless lives; I am just one testament to her impact on the student body."

STAR Teacher Katie Baker-Johnson has taught at Cedar Shoals for eight years, including 9th grade English and World Literature, and for the past three years, Peer Leadership. She has directed the Poetry Outloud Club and Freshmen Academy Mentoring Program.

"I could tell you all about Will's class rank or his contribution to conversations in AP classes or how his strength runs deep. But that's not why I love teaching Will. I am most proud of kindness. I teach better when Will is present in my class. I want to learn more, do more and be more when Will is in class. He makes me not only want to be a better teacher but also a better person. I have a deep faith he will enrich his next learning community in the same way he has enriched my classes and life for the last four years."

### **Clarke Central High School**

CCHS STAR Student Sophie Caillault will be attending the University of Georgia. Accepted to the Honors Program, she is considering majoring in French, horticulture, or plant biology. Sophie, who plays viola, was accepted into the GMEA All-State Orchestra all four years of high school. Sophie chose Ian Altman as her STAR Teacher.

"I took AP Language from Mr. Altman, and above all else, he cared about his students' learning. He always encouraged us to be critical thinkers, and he made a special effort to include topics in his curriculum that were of practical value to us, like current social issues, even if the readings and arguments demanded more of us and of him. Mr. Altman's sense of humor made his class fun and engaging, and his genuine care for his students and love of knowledge made him a wonderful teacher."

STAR Teacher Ian Altman has taught at CCHS for 15 years and is the Philosophy Club sponsor. He teaches 11th Grade Literature and Composition as well as AP English Language.

"Sophie Caillault is one of the leaders in the Philosophy Club. Sophie is generally a quiet student who thinks through what she has to say thoroughly before explaining her thoughts to a class, and her patience and willingness to deliberate on complex issues is something we all could learn from. Sophie is a gifted writer and has the ability to see her way to the heart of complicated arguments, taking careful note of their nuances and saying her case with proper force and clarity. She is a powerful intellectual force and a deeply humane one. I am proud to have had some small part in her education."

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