

# Soroptimist singles out 4 Whittell students for honors

*Publisher's note: On Feb. 23 Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe honored four students from Whittell High School as Young Women of Distinction. Bernadette Esquivel spoke about each woman. Here is what she had to say.*

**By Bernadette Esquivel**



STATELINE – I have had the pleasure of knowing **Karin Sharon** and her family for well over 12 years. Karin currently has a weighted gpa of 4.347 and she has taken all of the honors and AP classes we have to offer at Whittell High School, as well as some college classes.

She has maintained straight A's her whole high school career and has been on the honor roll all four years. She currently has 25 credits and will graduate with 27½ credits, when you only need 23 credits to graduate. She scored 1,820 on her SAT and a 26 on her ACT. She is a member of the National Honor Society and is the current president, she is also a member of the Key Club and she is the secretary. She was the class president her freshman year and a class representative her sophomore year.



Karin Sharon  
and Taylor  
Shepack

Karin began her community service career at age 13. Karin made her Bat Mitzvah when she was 13 years old and hurricane Katrina had just taken place a few months prior. After watching and hearing about all of the devastation caused by Katrina, she decided to donate all of the gift money she had received to the victims of the hurricane. After that day she tried to devote her spare time to serve her community and give back as much as she could.

Some of Karin's other community service has included working the Soroptimist food booth at the Celebrity Golf Tournament for four years, she helps the Rotary Club every year with the annual St. Patrick's Day fundraiser, Kiwanis Crab Feed, and she helped organized Teens for Jeans, an organization that donates jeans to thousands of homeless people in America.

In 2007, Lake Tahoe experienced a devastating fire that destroyed more than 250 homes, the Angora Fire. Karin was there to help for five consecutive days around the clock making beds, serving food, and many other acts that helped the evacuees. Her list of community service goes on and on.

Karin is also very athletic. She has been on the volleyball team for the past four years helping them attain a state title her junior year. She has been on the basketball team for four years and made the Nevada All State Academic Team Sports Award for three years and probably the same for this year.

Last year she won first place in the Rotary Speech contest at the club level and came in 4th place at the district level.

In Karin's spare time she tutors students who plan to make their Bar and Bat Mitzvah's and she substitute teaches for the Temple Bat Yam's Hebrew School.

Karin plans a career in communications and plans to study at either UC Berkeley, New York University, or Harvard.

**Taylor Shepack** is a wonderful George Whittell High School

student. While attending our school she has maintained a weighted gpa of 3.848 while taking a number of honor and AP classes. She already has the required number of credits to graduate from high school, which is 23, but she will graduate with 26 credits.

Taylor is a member of the National Honor Society and has been on the honor roll all four years. Taylor has also been on the student council, being the class representative her freshman year, vice president her sophomore year, class president her junior year and she is currently the senior class representative.

Taylor's community service has included Key Club for four years, the Festival of Lights, and Adopt a Grandparent. Her most memorable one would be Adopt a Grandparent. It is run through Barton Memorial Hospital. Taylor enjoys going to the hospital and visiting with the elderly, listening and talking to them. She stated that a lot of these folks don't have frequent visitors and it makes her day when she is able to bring a smile to someone's face and to let them know people do care.

Taylor's athletic abilities include soccer, dance, and cross country running. She has also been involved in our band for four years, Black and White Choir for three years, Christian club for four years, she is on the SMILE committee (Students Making It A little Easier) and the SIC committee which is a Students Issues Committee.

In Taylor's spare time she dances. She does hip hop, jazz, ballet, couples and modern dance. She takes dance classes all week at Marcia Sarosik's Dance Studio. She also enjoys hanging out with family and friends. During the summer she enjoys hiking, biking, swimming and hanging out at the beach.

Taylor plans on attend the University of Nevada Las Vegas and majoring in performing arts and business.

I have known **Lea Manzano** for many years. While attending George Whittell High School Lea has maintained a 3.7 gpa, she has been on the volleyball team for the past three years, as well as the basketball team for four years. Lea is currently a member of the National Honor Society and has been on the honor roll for the past three years.

Lea has been very instrumental with our school yearbook for the past three years. When I try to find her at lunch she can usually be found in the computer lab working on the yearbook or uploading pictures she took at a school event. Mr. Crammer, the yearbook advisor says, "Lea Manzano has been a key participant and editor for the yearbook the last three years. Her participation has led to the production of a memorable piece for the school. I couldn't have done it without her."

Lea began participating in community service when she was 13 years old. She started at Kahle Community Center working with the RAD camps. Lea has been involved in the South Lake Tahoe Women's Center, volunteering many hours of community service. She is one of their shelter program volunteers working with abused women and their children. She has learned that being a woman is very valuable and women are powerful and they should take pride in being a woman.

Lea plans on attending UNLV, UNR or LTCC. Lea has chosen a career path of journalistic or portrait photography. Lea will be very successful and we are proud to have her as one of our students.

I have had the pleasure of knowing **Samantha Brumbach** for 13 years, since she was in kindergarten. Sammy currently has a weighted gpa of 4.33 and has taken numerous honor and AP classes while attending George Whittell High School. She will graduate with 26 credit, where as a typical senior has 23 credits. Sammy has been on the honor roll all four years with straight A's.



Samantha  
Brumbach and  
Lea Manzano

She is a member of the National Honor Society, she is the executive vice president of the student body, she has sung for the Black and White Choir for the past three years, waking up extra early to get to school by 6:30am for zero period. She is a member of our school's Christian club for four years, and she has been a member of the Key Club for four years. The list goes on and on of her accomplishments.

Sammy's community service list is an extensive list as well. Some of her highlights have been going on a mission trip to Mexico her freshman year handing out food to people and painting a church, being a member of Key Club where she was vice president last year and this year she is the president. She is constantly thinking up new ideas for the group on community service projects. Her newest project is the Polar Bear Plunge on March 19 and all proceeds will go toward Special Olympics.

Sammy is not only a great student and a great asset to our school, but she is a wonderful athlete. She has been on the varsity soccer team for four years and when the team was disbanded her junior year that didn't stop her from playing soccer. She joined the boys' team and earned a starting position.

Ms. [Kathy] Bluethman, our athletic director said, "Sammy is an outstanding soccer player. She is so committed to her sports that when our girls' soccer team was withdrawn from our

school due to lack of amount of players, she was playing on the boys' team and was just as competitive as all the boys. She is always smiling and has a very positive attitude towards her academics, instructors, friends and teammates."

During her sophomore year Sammy played soccer for two weeks in Spain and France for a club team. She has also been a member of our girls' track team for the past three years and I am sure she will make the team this year too.

During her free time she skis, babysits for a number of our local families and she has helped at a soccer camp for children.

Sammy plans on studying at the Western Washington University and majoring in elementary education or in the health science field. Sammy looks at her life as a patchwork quilt. She states in her autobiography, "My fabric consist of loving parents, a home in the mountains, the care of three older sisters and a secure childhood. I grew up in a family where church and Sunday school were musts, and naming rocks, climbing trees and scraping knees were not only accepted, but expected. I grew up without any sort of technology such as Game Boys or even television, which forced my sisters and I to turn to each other and our imaginations for entertainment. I believe this lifestyle led me to be different from my peers and helped me form the pattern for my quilt."

*Bernadette Esquivel is the registrar and scholarship coordinator at Whittell High School.*