

# Wilmington Area High School



20 January 2023

Distinguished Members of the Truman Scholarship Committee:

It is with tremendous honor and great pleasure that I write this letter for Jason Hess in support of his scholarship application.

I have had the privilege of coaching and teaching Jason for four years. From the onset, Jason has proven to have an excellent work ethic, as evidenced by his effort and grades as a student in my very challenging pre-calculus and AP Calculus BC math classes. Jason earned a 4.4 GPA. In my thirteen years of teaching, no student has displayed a stronger work ethic than Jason. He is motivated far beyond his peers and demonstrates nobility in all tasks that he completes. He did his homework to the best of his ability on each and every assignment. Whether it was a pre-calculus problem or mowing the grass, Jason's motivation and work ethic are clear because he does everything he is asked to do to the very best of his ability. He is extraordinarily intellectual and interacts exceptionally well with people, which is a combination that breeds success. Jason was also the President of NHS and Peer Leadership Club, two clubs that I advised at the time he was a senior. Jason developed a comprehensive tutoring program that our NHS students still use today to help serve struggling students in our high school.

Jason's contribution to the football team, outside of statistical performance, was the greatest of any player on the team. Jason took being a captain to another level. At that point, he was considered half player and half coach. Jason measures 5' 7". He worked extremely hard to get himself listed as our top backup at the cornerback position. When our starting corner suffered a knee injury in week 5, Jason was asked to start in weeks 6-8. However, getting ready to play Hickory in the regular season finale, the coaching staff felt Jason's height would not allow him to match up with some of Hickory's taller receivers. Jason could have hung his head and pouted as the coaches elected to put a sophomore in as the starting cornerback against Hickory. Instead, Jason took it upon himself to coach and helped the sophomore each and every play at practice that week so that the sophomore would be at his best when we played Hickory on Friday night. Watching Jason coach this sophomore was the most selfless act I have witnessed in my sixteen years of coaching. Jason could always be seen coaching our defensive backs during every play of practice. He truly became another coach on the field and, in doing so, made a huge contribution to our team.

After Jason's graduation, I was honored to hire him as a member of our coaching staff. He has worked incredibly hard and has been promoted to the position of assistant head coach. In addition to his on-field coaching duties, Jason has a significant presence in the community, where he has organized our Salute to Service game (recognition for veterans and first responders), Literacy Under the Lights program (program promoting reading to the youth in our District), Shenango on the Green Day (day where football team assisted our local nursing home), Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony and community parade, and Kiwanis Club Halloween parade.

Jason is one of the top students I have ever encountered and one of the hardest-working players I have ever coached. He truly defined what it means to be a student-athlete. Hiring Jason as part of our coaching staff really brought everything full circle. I am certain that Jason would be an outstanding choice for the Truman Scholarship. It is with my greatest pleasure that I offer my highest recommendation in support of Jason Hess's scholarship application.

Sincerely,

Brandon M. Phillian  
Director of Educational Services  
Head Football Coach  
Wilmington Area School District