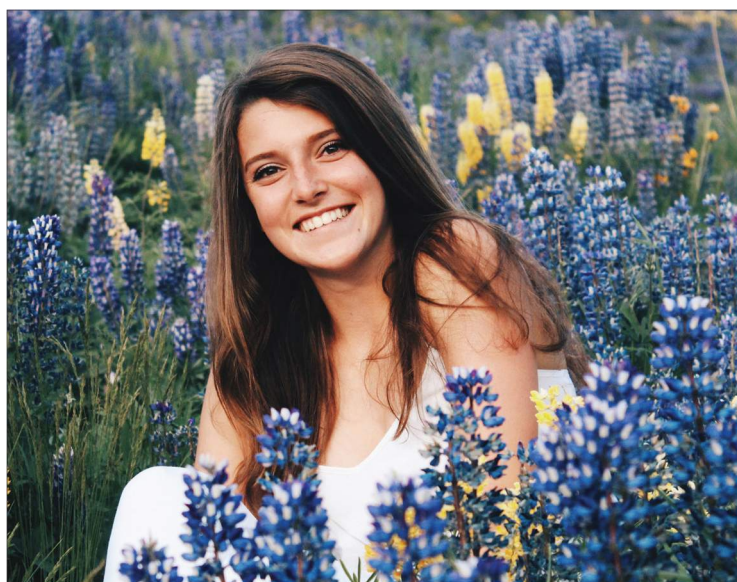


## SPONSORED FEATURE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Maya Hollister. Photo courtesy of Maya Hollister

# MAYA HOLLISTER

## *Student Thrives On Community Service*

BY JONATHAN KANE

Maya Hollister, a junior at Wood River High School carrying a 4.1 grade point average, likes to throw herself into community service.

At WRHS, Maya is a member of National Honor Society and the National Society of High School Scholars. She also plays varsity volleyball and participates in track and field. Having grown up in Carlsbad, Calif., she moved to the Wood River Valley when she was 6 years old.

"I love community service and giving back," Maya said. "My real hope is to go somewhere like Costa Rica my senior year for a humanitarian trip."

Maya traces her interest in helping others back to kindergarten when a tsunami hit Sri Lanka.

"My sister and I stood outside holding posters and we raised \$3,200," she said. "I love helping others, and as I grew up, I realized how fortunate I was to be able to do what I wanted to do and that I have clothes and food."

"My mom told us about the situation in Sri Lanka because she wanted us to understand that there are things going on outside our perfect world. I remember responding that they don't have food or any resources."

"I feel good to know that I'm doing my part to help other people in the world and to help them eat and have a roof over their heads."

Locally, Maya is an officer in the Key Club at WRHS, which partners with the Kiwanis Club on community service projects. There are 20 students in the club.

"We get together every Wednesday to discuss service opportunities," she said. "Some of the things we have done is read to children at the Community Campus, help with the food drive for The Hunger Coalition, babysit on school-sponsored nights like parent-teacher conferences, and help mothers with prenatal problems by raising money."

Maya's favorite activity, though, is walking dogs at the Animal Shelter.

"It's so much fun—and so much fun for them. I love seeing how excited they get when they get a chance to run because they've been cooped up all day."

Maya's personal project her sophomore year was all about service; it was a 5k Walk For Water.

"In Africa, there is no pure water in the villages. As a result, women and children walk about four miles twice a day in the broiling sun to get water, so there is no schooling for the kids and it's very dangerous."

"I wanted people to understand this, so I put a twist on the event and created a water challenge and got a bunch of buckets from Idaho Lumber. People were asked to carry a bucket one and half miles to the river, fill it with water and then carry it back. We had 20 people participate, with a lot of kids, and five did the challenge."

The event raised \$950, which went to a village in Kenya. The money goes to sanitation projects and making a sand dam in the village.

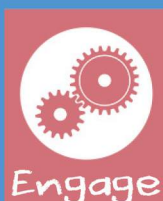
"Of course, it made me feel really good. I feel like I'm doing my part to help people in the world."

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