

## LEO MARCH NEWS



### UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

#### EASTER SUNDAY

April 5

#### PARENT CLUB MEETING

April 15 at 6 p.m.

#### WINDY CITY RELAYS

at Hanson Stadium

April 18 at 9 a.m.



### Dear Leo Family,

As we prepare for a big finish to the 2014-15 academic year, please join me in saluting senior **Dexter Dale**, odds-on favorite to be the Class of 2015 valedictorian and Leo's Man for All Seasons.

In the fall, Dexter made a valuable contribution to the football team, serving as its videographer and recording all the games for the coaching staff. The tapes not only serve instructional purposes for the coaches, they're also a useful tool for players being recruited. What the coaches at Northern Illinois and St. Joseph's College saw on tape prompted them to offer scholarships to Leo standouts **James Britten Jr.** (NIU) and **Latrell Giles** (St. Joe's).

Dexter is a product of the storied Jackie Robinson West Little League program, and this spring he is adding to his legacy as a four-year starter and co-captain of the varsity baseball team. And in the winter ... well, the records are a little sketchy, but we're not sure we have ever been able to identify a Leo student as the Chicago Catholic League chess champion.

That's Dexter, after he emerged as the first-board winner at the Catholic League tournament held at Mt. Carmel in February. First-board competitors are the top players for each team, and Dexter reprised his role at the Illinois Chess Federation High School Tournament in Peoria, adding to his trophy haul with a top 10 finish. Under volunteer coach **Dr. Mark Coleman**, Leo's chess team competed Downstate for the third consecutive year and enjoyed its best finish yet, placing 16th among more than 100 entrants. As busy as he is with extracurriculars, Dexter never neglects his studies. He's the No. 1-ranked student in the senior class academically and is in line to give the valedictory address at graduation on May 31.

We're working on Dexter to extend his stay at Leo, but come fall he'll be off to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to study business. It's been a true pleasure having Dexter around these last four years. He represents the best qualities of a true Leo Man.

Speaking of Leo Men, **Chicago Blackhawks President John McDonough** made quite an impression on a school full of them when he visited Leo on Friday, March 6. A longtime friend of **Leo President Dan McGrath**, McDonough addressed an all-school assembly, beginning his presentation with a video highlighting the Hawks' many accomplishments during his tenure. He later described the career path that took him from average student/mediocre athlete to one of the most influential leadership positions in Chicago sports.



“I worked hard, I believed in myself, and I was blessed to have other people believe in me,” McDonough said. “Plus I took advantage of every opportunity that came my way.”



Photos courtesy of Chicago Blackhawks

The students paid rapt attention, then peppered McDonough with good questions during a Q & A session that had to be cut off after 40 minutes so McDonough could return to work on a game day. The Hawks presented each Leo student and staffer with a gift bag.

“The best assembly we’ve ever had,” was the school-wide consensus. McDonough returned the compliment. “These young men are some of the finest I’ve been around,” he said. “I look forward to establishing a true working relationship with Leo.” We welcome the Blackhawks’ involvement with us as more good news.

***In May, we will graduate 100 percent of our seniors for the sixth consecutive year.*** College acceptance letters are rolling in, along with generous offers of financial assistance. At a recent assembly, more than a third of the student body was recognized for making the first-semester honor roll. Eight of the honorees had GPA’s of 4.0 or higher. In addition to signing a football letter-of-intent with Northern Illinois, **James Britten** qualified for the state tournament as a heavyweight wrestler as Leo revived its wrestling program after a 12-year absence.

Juniors **Darias Oliver** (second team) and **Darius Branch** (honorable mention) received All-State recognition for the basketball season, which ended with a loss to Hales in a sectional semifinal after the Lions won the championship of their own Class 2-A Regional. **Aamir Holmes**, a sophomore, traveled downstate to represent Leo at the IHSA three-point shooting contest.

**Over the Christmas holidays and again during their spring break, dozens of recent Leo grads who are now college students came by to say hi, to catch up, to let us know how they’re doing. It was a pleasure to see what outstanding young men they are becoming—outstanding young Leo Men. Rare is the visitor who doesn’t comment on the character, courtesy and class of the students he encounters here. They make us proud. It’s an honor to serve them.**

***May God’s blessings be with you and your family during this holy Easter season. Thank you for your continued support of Leo High School.***

Sincerely,

**Dan McGrath ’68**

Leo High School President