

“Be the Boss” 2023 Award Winners



Pictured from left is Board member Randy Cotton, Oliver Cox, Devyn Wilkinson and Michael’s Mom Debbie Jackson. (Photo by Bill Caine)

Two young wrestlers have been recognized for their outstanding performance and exceptional work ethic on the mat and classroom. Devyn Wilkinson and Oliver Cox were named recipients of the Michael Jackson “Be the Boss Award” Tuesday, April 18, at Woodford County Middle School. Both have demonstrated dedication to improving their skills on the mat and maintaining a solid work ethic in the classroom, just as the legacy Michael Jackson left in the WCHS wrestling room, according to Michael Jackson Scholarship Board member Randy Cotton. Their commitment to the sport has not gone unnoticed, as they have been awarded accolades for their remarkable achievements. These two young wrestlers serve as an inspiration to their peers, and their success is a testament to the rewards that come with hard work, determination, and a passion for what you do, according to Cotton.

“Both of these young men are great student-athletes and that is exactly the type of youngsters that we are looking to reward,” said Cotton. “After a few minutes with each kid, you get a sense that they have priorities lined up and have goals for the future. Michael was the kind of kid who worked hard at everything, and we want to continue to see kids who want to excel in the classroom and be leaders in the wrestling room and the community.”

Wilkinson, an eighth-grader at WCMS, has had a taste of wrestling on the WCHS team and said he continues to work on the fundamentals of the sport. He's a multi-sport athlete as he arrived at the award presentation in his WCMS baseball uniform and said he works hard in the classroom. "I've been wrestling for six years and it makes me feel great to know that my hard work was noticed by the folks at the Michael Jackson Scholarship," said Wilkinson. "Through wrestling, I learned I should never give up and push through challenging situations. The sport has shown me how to be physically and mentally strong. For now, I will keep working on the things I can control, like my weight and strength, so I can be the best wrestler I can be next season." Cox, a fourth-grader at the School for the Creative and Performing Arts in Lexington, said he likes to compete and was excited to win this award. He also commented that he thought the trophy was "really cool".

"I like winning," said Cox. "My favorite wins were winning first at regionals, and I took second at state. I started wrestling when I was 6 years old, and I just really liked being on the mat. I wrestle with the Woodford Elite Wrestling Club; the coaches are great."

Bill Caine