



# Elmbrook Student Athlete of the Month Sarah Poehlein

By Sharie Sinson, Director of Marketing, Vantage Financial

Sarah Poehlein, Brookfield East High School senior, vividly remembers watching the American Doll movie *Mckenna Shoots for the Stars* with her sister in third grade. Mesmerized by all the flips the girls perform in the movie, Sarah and her sister couldn't wait to start gymnastics class. It didn't take long before Sarah fell in love with the sport and started competing. Throughout her six years in club gymnastics, she was driven to excel. During her high school freshman year, Sarah experienced an unfortunate injury tearing her labrum at practice. The recovery road was long and difficult, but Sarah always had her eye on returning to the competition floor. However, shortly after her return, she suffered another setback due to an eating disorder. There were many days Sarah did not think she would ever return to her beloved sport, but after a visit from her coach while in the hospital, she was more determined than ever to overcome this obstacle and get back to what she loved doing.

After much reflection, Sarah made the hard decision to leave the demands of club gymnastics and join her high school team where she was welcomed with open arms by her teammates. Her Brookfield East coach shared, "Sarah is focused and determined, concentrating her time to help her teammates reach their goals." Sarah strives to be successful on all levels and has been part of the WIAA sectional gymnastic team and earned both Academic All-State and Scholar Athlete honors. In addition to her athletic and academic success, Sarah is actively involved in student council and the Spanish Honor Society.

Through Sarah's gymnastics journey she has gained strength and maturity while learning important lessons about discipline, courage, friendship, and determination. She is a positive role model who brings a healthy perspective to a challenging sport. Sarah shared a quote that a coach once said, "Walking a balance beam, 4 inches wide and 4 feet high, teaches a young girl to concentrate on where she is going in life. She quickly learns how to put her foot down and when to leap for her dreams." After a challenging two years, Sarah expressed, "I'm now ready to take that leap!"

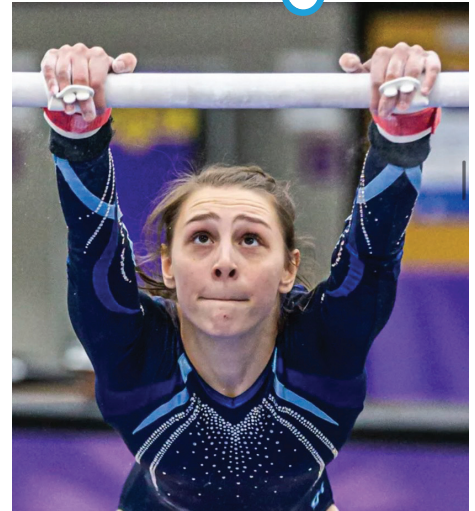
### Getting to know Sarah Poehlein:

**Future Plans:** I'll be attending Arizona State University to study Dietetics. I'm so excited to be a Sundevil as ASU offers exploratory programs that will allow me to pursue my many interests. I hope to study psychology and nutrition, so I help people down the road who have struggled with eating disorders like myself.

**Favorite Quote:** "All your dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them." – Walt Disney

**Favorite Food:** Spaghetti and meatballs

**Favorite Pre-Game Ritual:** Coach Kokta always knows what to say to get the team mentally prepared for the upcoming meet and does an amazing job styling everyone's hair while we chat. She helps me look my best and perform my best. Surprisingly, my overall favorite part of meets is having my sister there by my side. It's fun having a built-in best friend on the team and a little added competition between the two of us.



**Gymnastic Highlight:** Qualifying for the WIAA Sectionals. Last season was far from normal, but it made our team stronger. Everyone put their best foot forward and gave 100% effort. At Sectionals I scored my personal best on varsity bars!

**Fun fact about Sarah:** When I'm not at the gym, I'm usually frosting and decorating cakes for Nothing Bundt Cakes in Brookfield. I meet so many new people and truly enjoy my job.

*The Athlete of the Month Scholarship program application can be found on the Vantage Financial website [www.VFPlanning.com](http://www.VFPlanning.com) or through your high school's guidance and career counseling website. If you are a high school senior who plays sports, resides in Elm Grove or Brookfield, and attends a Wisconsin high school, you are eligible to apply for a \$1,500 scholarship sponsored by Vantage Financial Partners.*



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