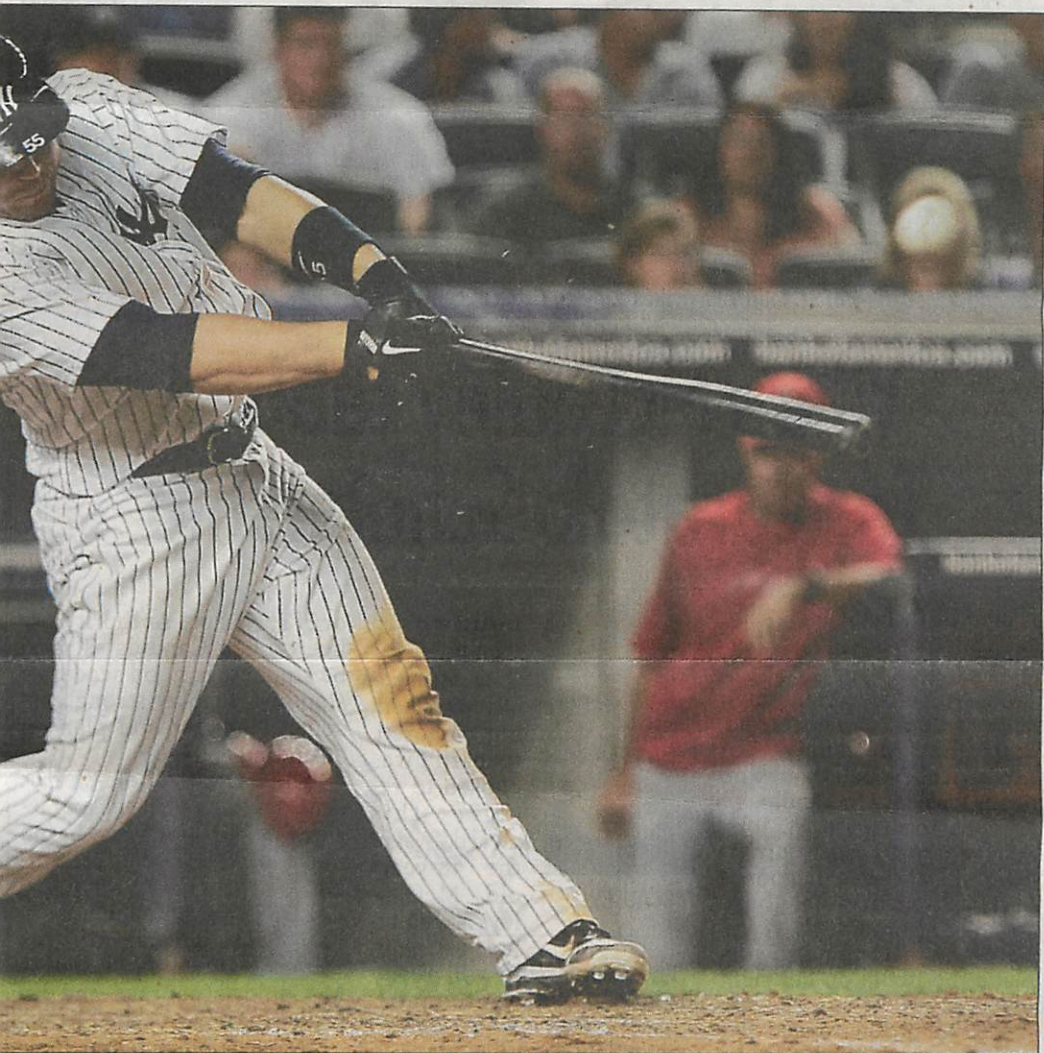


SATURDAY
JULY 14, 2012NEW YORK YANKEES

ASSOCIATED PRESS

ad with this eighth-inning single.

le relief for Martin

talk with manager Joe Girardi, who pulled him aside before the All-Star break in hopes his words might alter the trajectory of Martin's season.

"It worked," Martin said, after a 6-5 Yankees victory last night, in which his eighth-inning single knocked in the go-ahead run.

Martin spent half a season as the weakest link, feeling as if he had done nothing to contribute to a team that has overcome a string of obst-

acles to post the best record in baseball. In one night, however, Martin showed

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why the Yankees continue to have faith in him. Girardi could have pinch hit for Martin in the eighth, when Angels manager Mike Scioscia intentionally walked Raul Ibanez with a base open. He dared the

slumping catcher to make him regret his decision.

In the batter's box, Martin wondered if Girardi might summon someone else, a move he even conceded would have been understandable.

"I had no thoughts about pinch hitting for him there," said Girardi, who watched Martin slap a two-out single to cap a four-run Yankee rally.

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HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS



STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE/HILTON FLORES

Samantha McCauley of St. John Villa makes a diving catch in centerfield.

Villa's McCauley tabbed for Curatolo Scholarship

By CHARLIE De BIASE JR.
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Long before her high school softball career started, Samantha McCauley got thrown a curveball that by no means was easy to handle.

When the recent St. John Villa graduate was just 12 years old, she was diagnosed with an aneurysmal bone cyst. In McCauley's case, there was a tumor growing inside the fibula on her right leg.

Her condition caused her bone to fracture and she needed surgery to have the tumor removed. The surgery was successfully performed by Dr. James Wittig, whom McCauley refers to as her hero.

"A hero is defined as a man or woman admired for his or her achievements and noble qualities," she stated. "Dr. Wittig's ability to explain a complicated situation to a scared 12-year-old girl in an understandable way, his knowledge and his expertise make him a hero to me."

McCauley's touching story, which she related in an essay, played a major role in the four-year varsity player being voted the 11th annual Robert Curatolo Scholarship Fund (RCSF) winner.

McCauley is only the second female student to win the RCSF Award, and the first since 2003, when Notre Dame Academy's Stephanie



MCCAULEY

Longworth won it.

"I was really shocked, but honored, to learn I was chosen to receive this award," said the 18-year-old McCauley, a Huguenot resident.

"The scholarship will really be helpful (with my tuition)."

McCauley, who played centerfield for Villa, plans to continue her softball career at the College of Staten Island.

Curatolo, a lifelong Rosebank resident and New York City firefighter assigned to Ladder 16 in Manhattan, was one of the 343 firefighters who perished in the World Trade Center attack and rescue effort on Sept. 11, 2001. The Curtis HS grad had just ended a 24-hour shift at his midtown firehouse when he raced to the Twin Towers to aid in the rescue effort.

Curatolo played varsity baseball and basketball at Curtis and coached at the high school and grammar school levels for many years.

The scholarship is awarded annually to a high school senior who participates in baseball or softball and has a parent or guardian who is an active or retired city police officer, firefighter

or NY/NJ Port Authority police officer. Candidates must be students in good academic standing, display strong personal character and plan on attending college.

The \$5,000 scholarship is sent to the college admissions or bursar's office in the name of the student recipient.

RCSF committee members Kathy Curatolo and Christine Curatolo-Dowd marveled at McCauley's courage and insightful nature.

"Most applicants put their parents as their heroes, but she didn't. She picked her doctor, which I found interesting," said Kathy Curatolo. "The bottom line is, she's a courageous kid with guts, and Robert had guts too."

"Her story really touched me," added Christine Curatolo-Dowd. "She went through some hard times, but she persevered and didn't give up."

"I think of Rob in that light," she added. "Just like Rob, she was brave and that's something special to all of us."

Robert Curatolo Fund Scholarship winners

- 2002—Jim Lopovich (Curtis)
- 2003—Stephanie Longworth (NDA)
- 2004—Eric Waldhelm (Curtis)
- 2005—Tom Downing (Curtis)
- 2006—Chris Mandala (Farrell)
- 2007—Ralph Tufano (Sea)
- 2008—Drew Walsh (Curtis)
- 2009—Michael McDermott (Farrell)
- 2010—Vincent Cascella (MSIT)
- 2011—Daniel Karasinski (New Dorp)
- 2012—Samantha McCauley (Villa)