

# Student Ambassador Spotlight: Michael Rizzo of Lyndhurst

Michael Rizzo is a fan of high school sports, and not just the ones he's involved with at Lyndhurst High School.

Because of that, the junior was intrigued at the chance to become a NJSIAA Student Ambassador. He submitted an application, and last year was chosen to be one of the 19 student-athletes from throughout the state to serve as a voice for the state's high school athletes through their meetings with NJSIAA administration.

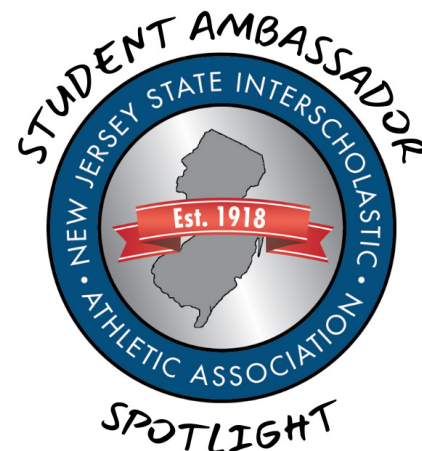
"I was interested in becoming a Student Ambassador because of my immense love for New Jersey High School sports," said Michael, who plays football in the fall and baseball in the spring. His winter is spent doing conditioning work for both sports, and of course, watching his fellow classmates compete. "I follow nearly every sport and was intrigued to be able to make my mark on them, even the ones I don't play."

He's enjoyed getting to know his fellow ambassadors, and hearing the issues they deal with at their schools. He's also hopeful the group can make a difference.

"The most interesting dialogues are when I get to learn about everyone's individual stories and experiences," he said. "I am hopeful that our group



*Photos provided by Michael Rizzo*



can promote more sportsmanship across the state while also promoting the betterment of all sports for all student-athletes."

He enjoys his own involvement as an athlete, especially as one who is so active throughout the year.

"The most challenging things are balancing time for both sports during the winter season," he said. "When I am off, I am balancing the weight room and the diamond. I am fully committed to both sports, however time is hard to come by when training for both."

## Getting to know Student Ambassador Michael Rizzo:

***Favorite school subject:*** "I love pre-calculus."

***Favorite athlete:*** Bryce Harper.

***Favorite team:*** New York Yankees.



***Do you have any superstitions or pre-game rituals?***

"During football season, I drink at least two bottles of Pedialyte a week, and always drink the final quarter of the bottle at halftime, to avoid cramping. I also always eat a banana on Fridays, and always eat two slices of buffalo chicken pizza at Villa Italia for lunch. During baseball season, it's the same two slices on game days at Villa Italia, but I also find myself taking off my cross and putting it in my back pocket during games. If I am pitching, I always make the sign of the cross before I deliver my first pitch."

***How do you spend time on the bus on the way to an away game?***

"Locked in, listening to music, trying to get rid of the butterflies."

***Favorite food:*** "Mac and Cheese - all day, forever"

***Favorite lunch at school:*** Villa Italia pizza.

***The best thing about my school is...?*** "The camaraderie of students coming to support all different sports. Shoutout to @thehurst\_bearcave. Follow us on the insta."

***What's your favorite thing about being a high school athlete?*** "Making my parents proud. My dad, while he claims that he would hit a bomb off of me, never threw a complete game, one-hit shutout."

***What's the best quality in a teammate?*** "Leadership and being able to pick other teammates up."

***What's been your proudest moment so far as a student?*** "Being ranked No. 5 in my class."

***Favorite sports memory:*** "Florida trip sophomore year and beating Dwight-Englewood in the league championship."

***Is there a sport you don't play but would some day like to try?*** "Golf. I will be shooting lower than my dad in 10 years. I hope he reads this."

***Have you ever met anyone famous?*** "Bryce Harper. He asked me for a picture when I was about 7 on the field at a Nationals-Pirates game. I also met Frank the Tank from Barstool in ShopRite last week."

***If you could have a super power, what would it be and why?*** "I would fly, so I wouldn't need to ask for a ride ever again."

***If there were 25 hours in a day, what would you do with the extra hour?*** "Sleep."

***What's the best place you've ever traveled to?*** "Cancun is pretty awesome."

***Do you have any pets?*** "I have two awesome dogs. DJ (Derek Jeter) and Abby."

***Do you have a career ambition yet?*** "I want to pursue a career in finance."

