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DSHS Coach Is Finalist for National Award

DSHS cross country/girls' track coach Marisa Parks is one of 13 national finalists for the Brooks Running Inspiring Coach of the Year Award.

The annual, multinational award recognizes a coach who goes above and beyond to inspire his or her team members to push themselves to new heights while creating a lasting difference in the community.

Coach Parks joins 12 other finalists who Brooks will consider when crowning the Inspiring Coach of the Year at an awards dinner on June 17 in Seattle. She was selected from a pool of more than 1,000 nominations that came from runners and their parents and family members, coaching colleagues, school administrators and the running community at large.

For her unique ability to inspire runners of all ages, dedication to fostering a passion for the sport and for affecting lasting change in the community, Parks will receive \$5,000 in Brooks performance running gear and \$500 in cash for team expenses. The 2016 overall winner will receive an additional \$5,000 in gear and \$2,000 in cash, totaling \$12,500 in benefits for their team.

Coach Parks is now in her 14th year at Dripping Springs High School where in addition to serving as the head cross country and girls' track coach, she also is the assistant athletic director and has taught in the Career and Technology department. A native of Dayton, Ohio, she attended Texas A&M University where she lettered for three years in track and field, graduating in 1999 with a bachelor's degree of business administration.

The Inspiring Coach of the Year Award continues to evolve and pay tribute to those in the running community doing the most to inspire runners. Last year, Brooks expanded its search for the Inspiring Coach of the Year to Canada, and this year, it opened the award to coaches outside of high schools, acknowledging the important work they do in youth clubs, community running groups and more.

