

[GI duo on Hoops Fest roster](#)

By Ryan Nagelhout [Greater Niagara Newspapers](#)

BUFFALO —

Kallie Banker and Cassie Oursler have been teammates on Grand Island for years, but this time around they'll represent Buffalo as part of the Basketball Coaches Association of New York's Summer Hoops Festival, which starts Friday in Johnson City.

With the cancellation of the Empire State Games leaving a void in the summer basketball scene, the BCANY launched the tournament for high school-age boys and girls teams this summer. The BCANY divided the state up into eight regions, with Buffalo and Western New York finalizing a 10-member team in late July.

The Buffalo team features a number of local standouts and will be coached by Lockport girls coach Bill Shaw, with Grand Island girls coach Jenepher Banker serving as an assistant.

Other locals on the squad include Lockport's Marisa Guyton, Roy-Hart's Jesse DeWaters and Cardinal O'Hara's Sara Depasquale. The younger Banker said she's excited to play with an impressive group.

"When we tried out it was really cool to see everyone that came out," she said. "That was cool to find a new perspective and get to play with people you play against all year long."

Banker, a senior guard who has committed to the University of Rhode Island, is also looking forward to playing with Oursler, a 6-foot-3 junior center, on another talented team.

"It's really beneficial to play with Cassie," she said. "We've played with each other almost our entire lives. It's cool to play with her on this kind of team."

The locals begin tournament play at 6 p.m. Friday with a matchup against the Long Island region. Saturday features a pair of games against Mid-Hudson (9 a.m.) and Hudson Valley (noon), with championship and consolation games running on Sunday.