The McMurry Scholar Athlete Award, founded in 2008 by 1960 social work graduate Preston V. McMurry, Jr. of Phoenix, Arizona, honors student athletes with a minimum 3.0 GPA, who best exemplify the idea of "Education for Citizenship" through significant volunteer service to the community. Coaches representing the 36 varsity sports nominated candidates for this award, and a committee of graduate-level social work student leaders selected the recipient.

McMurry was an important member of the Woody Hayes 1957 Championship Football team. Today, he is the founder of McMurry Inc., the 12th largest advertising and marketing firm in the United States. McMurry received the 2002 OSU Alumni Association Citizen Award and was selected as Arizona’s 2001 Philanthropist of the Year. Preston McMurry is also the founder of The Scholar Athlete Award.