

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

New NFHS Officers, Board Members Elected

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bruce Howard

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (July 22, 2010) — **Nina Van Erk**, executive director of the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA), is the new president of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) for 2010–11. Van Erk, the 51st president of the NFHS, began her one-year term July 11 following the NFHS Summer Meeting in San Diego, California.

Rick Wulkow, executive director of the Iowa High School Athletic Association (IHSAA), was elected by the NFHS Board of Directors to the position of president-elect for the upcoming year.

In addition, three new NFHS Board of Directors members were approved for four-year terms. All Board of Directors members were approved by the NFHS National Council. **Ralph Swearngin**, executive director of the Georgia High School Association

(GHSA), Section 3; **Harold Slemmer**, executive director of the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA), Section 7; and **Bennie Bennett**, superintendent of the Newberry (South Carolina) County School System, at large, Sections 3 and 7, will begin their terms this year.

Van Erk began her career in education at Rhinebeck (New York) Central Schools in 1977, and was athletic director from 1983 to 1995. She then served as the director of health, physical education and athletics in the Katonah (New York) Lewisboro School District for five years before being named NYSPHSAA executive director in 2000.

Prior to joining the NYSPHSAA staff, Van Erk served on numerous committees including the Section 1 Athletic Council, the Section 1 Executive Committee, the NYSPHSAA Executive Committee and the NYSPHSAA Championship Advisory Committee. At the national level, Van Erk has served on the NFHS Annual Meeting Planning Committee and is a current member of the NFHS National High School Spirit of Sport Award Selection Committee. She has served on the NFHS Board of Directors for the past three years.

Van Erk received an associate's degree in physical education in 1975 from Marymount College in Arlington, Virginia, and a bachelor's degree in physical education from Ithaca (New York) College in 1977. In 1981, she received a master's degree in health education from Russell Sage College in Troy, New York, and in 1984

she earned certification as a school administrator/supervisor from the State University of New York in New Paltz, New York.

Wulkow, who has served on the NFHS Board of Directors for two years, was named IHSAA executive director in 2005 after 25 years as assistant executive director. Prior to joining the IHSAA, Wulkow was a teacher and football, track and baseball coach at Radcliffe (Iowa) High School (1967–70) and Denison (Iowa) High School (1970–75), where he also was athletic director. He then was an assistant football coach at the University of South Dakota for two years before returning to the high school level as principal at Paullina (Iowa) High School (1977–78) and Jefferson (Iowa) High School (1978–80).

Wulkow, a highly respected basketball official for almost 30 years, was a member of the NFHS Strategic Planning Committee and a former chairperson of the NFHS Basketball Rules Committee. As an official, he worked 11 postseason collegiate tournaments, including five with the NCAA. He was interim commissioner and supervisor of officials for the Iowa Intercollegiate Conference and also served as an observer of football and basketball officials for the Big 12 Conference, as well as an officials scout for the National Football League. A longtime member of the National Association of Sports Officials (NASO), Wulkow was selected president of the NASO Board of Directors for 2010–11.

Wulkow received his bachelor's degree from Buena Vista (Iowa) University and his master's degree in school administration from the University of South Dakota.

Swearngin was named executive director of the GHSA in 2001, after serving as commissioner of officials for eight years and deputy director for one year. He is a former professor of psychology and education at Atlanta Christian College in East Point, Georgia, where he also coached basketball and baseball for 20 years.

Nationally, Swearngin has served on the NFHS Football Rules Committee since 1992 and is past chair of the NFHS Softball Rules Committee. He is a member of the NASO Board of Directors and the American Association of Adapted Sport Programs Board of Directors.

Swearngin was a football official in Georgia and California for more than 20 years, and is an author and speaker in the areas of coaching and officiating. He was inducted into the National Christian College Athletic Association Hall of Fame in 1992.

Swearngin received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Whittier (California) College and his doctorate in educational psychology from Georgia State University.

Slemmer was named executive director of the AIA in 1999, after nine years as inaugural principal of the award-winning Mountain Pointe High School in Phoenix. Under Slemmer's leadership, Mountain Pointe received numerous awards, including A+ Schools Recognition semifinalist three times.

Slemmer has been recognized as a leader in curriculum development, high school administration and instruction at the high school and university levels. He was the recipient of the Distinguished Arizonan Award in 2001 and the North Central Accreditation Association's Circle of Excellence. In 2002, in response to his efforts in character development, Slemmer was appointed to Arizona's Governor's Commission of Character Education.

Slemmer has made presentations in 20 states on educational and ethics training programs and policies, including AIA's "Pursuing Victory with Honor" initiative. At the national level, he served on the National Presence Subcommittee of the 2002-2005 NFHS Strategic Planning Committee.

An NCAA Division I athlete at Arizona State University, Slemmer played football for Frank Kush while working toward his bachelor's degree in 1975. He also received his master's (1976) and doctorate of education (1986) from Arizona State.

Superintendent of the Newberry County School System since 2006, Bennett has worked in public education for 27 years. He has certification as a superintendent, secondary supervisor, secondary principal, elementary supervisor, elementary principal and physical education instructor.

Bennett began his career as a physical education teacher at Clover (South Carolina) Middle School, where he also served as the junior varsity basketball and

football coach. After two years in Clover, Bennett moved to Fort Mill (South Carolina) High School to teach physical education and coach the varsity boys basketball squad.

Bennett returned to Clover in 1989 as the assistant principal and varsity boys basketball coach at Clover High School. Bennett also served as athletic director before becoming principal of Clover Middle School in 1998. Bennett served as assistant superintendent for secondary programs in the Clover School District for 3½ years before taking his current position at Newberry.

Bennett received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Winthrop (South Carolina) College. He was the first men's basketball player to score 1,000 points for the Eagles.

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This press release was written by Arika Herron, a summer intern in the NFHS

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About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience,

establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.5 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, speech and debate coaches and music adjudicators; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org.

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