



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

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NIAAA to Present Ten Distinguished Service Awards to High School Athletic Directors

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (November 17, 2011) — Ten individuals who have made outstanding contributions to interscholastic athletics have been named recipients of the 2011 Distinguished Service Awards given by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA).

These individuals will be honored December 13 in Indianapolis, Indiana, during the banquet at the 42nd annual National Athletic Directors Conference conducted jointly by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the NIAAA.

The Distinguished Service Award is presented annually to individuals from within the NIAAA membership in recognition of their length of service, special accomplishments and contributions to interscholastic athletics at the local, state and national levels. Nominations are submitted by state athletic director associations, screened by the NIAAA Awards Committee, and selected by the NIAAA Board of Directors.

This year's winners include **Richard Barton**, CMAA, athletic director/assistant principal, Richfield (Utah) High School; **Bruce Bowen**, CMAA, dexecutive director, Virginia Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, Mechanicsville, Virginia; **Margaret Conaty**, CAA, athletic director, Hingham (Massachusetts) High School; **Samuel Elias**, CMAA, athletic director, Hershey (Pennsylvania) High School; **Daniel Johnson**, CMAA, district director of athletics, Hopkins (Minnesota) Public Schools; **Mike Kimmons**, CMAA, athletic administrator/assistant principal, Adamsville (Tennessee) High School; **Jim Piccolo**, District One director, Washington Interscholastic Activities Association; **Sam Rasmussen**, CAA, retired athletic director, Valparaiso (Indiana) High School; **Joseph Sanfilippo**, CMAA, athletic director, White County High School, Cleveland, Georgia; and **Bob Trahern**, CAA, athletic/activities director, Canon City (Colorado) High School.

Following are the biographical sketches of this year's award winners:

Richard Barton, CMAA, Richfield, Utah

After a highly successful eight years as basketball coach at Richfield (Utah) High School, Richard Barton, CMAA, has served as the school's athletic director and assistant principal since 1996. Barton accumulated a record of 106–64 as a basketball coach and led Richfield to a regional championship in four of his eight seasons. He was named Class 3A Coach of the Year in 1996.

Barton was a two-time all-state basketball player at Cedar City (Utah) Cedar High School and was the second all-time leading scorer at Southern Utah University (SUU), as well as top 10 in rebounds assists and blocks. In his senior season, Barton was among the top Division I scorers (20 points per game), and was named Academic All–

American and Southern Utah Athlete of the Year, and he received an NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship. Barton received his bachelor's and master's degree from SUU.

As an athletic director, Barton earned Utah High School Activities Association Athletic Director of the Year honors in 2009. He has served on the Utah Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (UIAAA) Athletic Advisory Board since 2004 and the UIAAA Executive Board since 2007, and he was UIAAA president in 2008–09. Since 2002, Barton has directed the UIAAA Hall of Fame Basketball Game.

Locally, Barton served as the Region 12 Board of Managers secretary/treasurer from 2002 to 2006, and is currently the region representative for the Athletic Directors Executive Council. He also served on the Utah Basketball Coaches Association Executive Board from 1997 to 2002.

Barton has been a member of the NIAAA for 13 years, and a state delegate for five years. He served on the NIAAA's third Strategic Planning Committee, is a CAA test administrator and a member of the NIAAA Leadership Training Institute faculty.

In 2009, Barton was a recipient of an NFHS Citation for athletic directors.

Bruce Bowen, CMAA, Mechanicsville, Virginia

Bruce Bowen, CMAA, has been executive director of the Virginia Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (VIAAA) since 2008 after an outstanding 37-year career as a teacher, coach and athletic administrator at Hermitage High School in Richmond, Virginia.

Bowen returned to his high school alma mater in 1972 and coached football, boys track, boys cross country and girls cross country during his highly successful 15–

year stint as a coach at the school. In 1987, Bowen became the school's athletic administrator and served 22 years before retiring in 2009.

Bowen was the founder of the Central Virginia Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association, and served as its chairman for six years between 1997 and 2003. He also was the district awards chair from 1987 to 2009 and managed 100 district, regional and state tournaments. He started cheer competition and directed that event for 10 years.

Before becoming VIAAA executive director, Bowen was president in 2004–05 and served as chair of several VIAAA committees, as well as chair of the 1997 and 2002 VIAAA State Conferences. Bowen also served on the Virginia High School League Executive Committee in 1999–2000.

In his work with the NIAAA, Bowen was a moderator at several National Athletic Directors Conferences, a member of the National Executive Directors Council (NEDC) and has represented sections two, three and four on the NEDC Executive Committee since 2009. He is also the author of two articles for NIAAA publications.

Bowen has been a member of the NIAAA and VIAAA for 25 years. Among his awards, he was named VIAAA State Athletic Administrator of the Year in 1999–2000, and he received the NIAAA State Award of Merit in 2003. Bowen was inducted into the Virginia High School Hall of Fame in 2007.

Upon his retirement in 2009, Bowen was inducted into the Hermitage High School Hall of Fame and the Hermitage Gymnasium was dedicated in his honor.

Margaret Conaty, CAA, Hingham, Massachusetts

With a focus on sportsmanship and academic achievement, Margaret Conaty, CAA, has enjoyed a remarkable 35-year career as athletic director at four different

Massachusetts high schools. Since 2008, Conaty has been athletic director at Hingham (Massachusetts) High School.

Conaty began her career in 1976 as athletic director and physical education director at Notre Dame Academy in Hingham. During her time there, Conaty was on the Catholic High School Advisory Board and was responsible for ethics, integrity and growth. She introduced new interscholastic programs of cross country, gymnastics, spring track and soccer to Notre Dame.

In 1985, Conaty moved to Cardinal Cushing School in Hanover, Massachusetts, as athletic director and physical education director. Again, she introduced new interscholastic programs – cross country and spring track – as well as being responsible for the coordination of fundraising activities within the business community and development of school-wide parent involvement in the activities.

In 1989, Conaty began a 19-year run as athletic director at Mansfield (Massachusetts) High School. There, she created and developed a committee of parents, teachers, coaches and students to advise on issues that impacted the Mansfield athletic program. Once more, Conaty started new sport offerings in volleyball, gymnastics, wrestling, ice hockey and lacrosse, as well as a host of junior varsity and freshmen teams.

At the state level, Conaty served on the Massachusetts Secondary School Athletic Directors Association (MSSADA) Executive Board from 1987 to 1998, including a term as president in 1997. She has also worked with the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) on its Tournament Management Committee, Women in Sports Leadership Committee and Coaching Education Development Committee.

At the national level, Conaty was an NIAAA State Delegate from 1996 to 1998, and served on the NFHS Coaches Association Board of Directors. She is also

responsible for the organization and presentation of the NFHS Coach of the Year Program for Section 1. Conaty earned her CAA certification in 1995.

Conaty was named the Boston Globe Coach of the Year for cross country in 1983 and was the recipient of the MIAA John E. Young Award for distinguished service in 1998. Other honors include induction into the New England Basketball Hall of Fame, and the New Agenda/Northeast Hall of Fame for outstanding contributions in athletics.

Conaty received her bachelor's degree from the University of Rhode Island, and earned her master's degree from the University of Massachusetts.

Samuel Elias, CMAA, Hershey, Pennsylvania

Sam Elias, CMAA, joined the Derry (Pennsylvania) Township School District at the beginning of the 2002–03 school year and currently serves as director of athletics at Hershey (Pennsylvania) High School.

Elias began his career in education as a teacher at the elementary, middle school and high school levels and coached football, wrestling, baseball and softball. His teams won numerous conference and state championships, and he coached five individual state wrestling champions. Elias was inducted into the East Stroudsburg Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Prior to coming to the Derry Township School District, Elias was the assistant principal and athletic director at Lebanon (Pennsylvania) High School and Bermudian Springs (Pennsylvania) High School. During his time at Lebanon, Elias established an athletic hall of fame; he later started a hall of fame at Hershey as well.

Elias is currently serving on the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) Board of Directors. He also serves on the PIAA District III Board of Directors and Athletic Directors Association Board of Directors. Elias is also PIAA District III chair,

field hockey chair, as well as boys and girls lacrosse chair. He is a former PIAA District III vice-chairman and softball chair.

Elias is a lifetime member of the NIAAA, and became a NFICEP/ACEP Certified Instructor in 1991. He was one of the first athletic directors in Pennsylvania to receive CAA and CMAA certification from the NIAAA. In 2006, Elias received the Pennsylvania State Athletic Directors Association (PSADA) Distinguished Service Award, and he was selected PSADA Athletic Director of the Year in 2007. In 2008, he was named National Association for Sport and Physical Education Eastern District Athletic Director of the Year, which named him as one of the top five athletic directors in the nation.

Elias holds a bachelor's degree from Mansfield (Pennsylvania) University and a master's degree from the University of Scranton (Pennsylvania).

Daniel Johnson, CMAA, Hopkins, Minnesota

Now in his 12th year as district director of athletics for the Hopkins (Minnesota) Public Schools, Daniel Johnson, CMAA, is one of the most accomplished athletic directors in the state. He is responsible for 32 high school teams, 14 junior high teams, six fine arts activities and 170 coaches and 10 fine arts directors in one of the largest school districts in Minnesota.

Johnson connects monthly with his "Captains Council" at Hopkins and networks on a daily basis with nearly 3,000 students who are involved in educational activity programs.

At the state level, Johnson is a master teacher for the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) Coaches Education programs, serves on the MSHSL Administrative Region Committee and is the site manager for the MSHSL Boys Basketball Tournament.

Johnson started his career in education in 1984 in the Mabank (Texas) Independent School District as head baseball coach, assistant football coach and faculty member in social studies. From there, he went to Northern State (South Dakota) University in 1986 as a graduate assistant in health and physical education, graduate assistant football coach and graduate assistant baseball coach.

In 1987, Johnson joined the Ranger (Texas) Independent School District, where he served as athletic director, head football and baseball coach, and faculty member in physical education and history. After four years, he moved on to Peru (Nebraska) State College as a director of athletics, associate professor in health and physical education, and head baseball coach.

Johnson joined the Hopkins Public Schools in 1996 as facility use manager and baseball coach until 1999, when he became the district's director of athletics.

Johnson earned his CAA certification in 1998 and his CMAA certification in 2005. A member of the Minnesota Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MNIAAA) since 1999, Johnson was MNIAAA region representative from 2002 to 2008, and has been the chair of the State Award of Merit Selection Committee since 2008.

Johnson has attended the National Athletic Directors Conference since 1998, presenting workshops three times, and has been an NIAAA member since 1999. He has also served on the national faculty of the NIAAA Leadership Training Institute since 2004.

Johnson received his bachelor's degree, as well as his master's degree from Northern State University.

Mike Kimmons, CMAA, Adamsville, Tennessee

Mike Kimmons, CMAA, has spent his entire 29-year career in his home state of Tennessee as a teacher, coach and administrator. He began his career at Ripley High School and since 1998 has served as the athletic administrator/assistant principal for Adamsville (Tennessee) High School.

Kimmons has been district coordinator of the Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) since 2005. He has also been an ex officio member on the TSSAA Board of Control and Legislative Council since 2010.

Kimmons held the position of president of the Tennessee Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (TIAAA) in 2010–11. He was also the vice president of the organization from 2008 to 2010 and currently serves on the TIAAA Board of Directors (since 2003) and as the TIAAA chair of the Tennessee Athletic Directors Conference Program Committee (since 2000).

Kimmons has taught multiple NIAAA Leadership Training Institute (LTI) classes at state conferences and has attended athletic director conferences in Alabama, California and Kentucky in an effort to improve Tennessee's conference. Kimmons was also named the Tennessee Athletic Director of the Year in 1997.

A 15-year member of the NIAAA, Kimmons currently serves as a member of the organization's Awards Committee. In 1997, Kimmons was a member of the Tennessee Host Committee for the National Athletic Directors Conference, and 10 years later was chair of the host committee.

Kimmons, who has attended 14 of the past 15 national conferences, taught LTI classes as part of the first NIAAA Urban Outreach program in Memphis in 2006. He taught the same courses to several new athletic directors from the Memphis area the next year as well. Kimmons has served as a speaker, moderator and delegate at several national conferences.

In addition to his administrative duties, Kimmons served as an umpire for eight TSSAA state baseball tournaments from 1990 to 2005. In 2004, he was awarded the TSSAA Distinguished Service Award and the NIAAA State Award of Merit, and in 2008, he received the A.F. Bridges Official of the Year Award from the TSSAA.

Jim Piccolo, Stanwood, Washington

Jim Piccolo, who was athletic director at Stanwood (Washington) High School from 1984 to 2006, is currently Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) District One director. His work at Stanwood was expansive, ranging from co-founding the Stanwood Booster Club to adding weightlifting to the school's physical education program. Piccolo also directed an audit of the athletic program in his district and created a two-day summer conference for the Stanwood coaching staff.

Prior to moving into administrative positions, Piccolo was a teacher and baseball and wrestling coach at Stanwood.

Piccolo was the meet and tournament manager in Stanwood's athletic conference and has served on the District Eligibility Committee since 1987. He has also presented NIAAA Leadership Training Institute (LTI) classes to local athletic directors who were unable to attend the national conference.

Piccolo was the Washington State Secondary Athletic Administrators Association (WSSAAA) president in 1997 and has been a board member of the organization for more than 15 years. He has also contributed to the organization's newsletter for more than six years.

Piccolo has also been the LTI coordinator for the state athletic directors conference for the past few years. His duties include presenting breakout sessions, organizing classes and learning materials, and finding instructors.

At the national level, Piccolo started his affiliation with the NIAAA in 1996 as a state liaison, a position he still holds today. At the same time, he became the State Education Trainer Coordinator for all LTI courses. Piccolo is a member of the LTI National Faculty for three Leadership Training Courses. He has also been a certified American Sport Education Program instructor since 1999.

Among his awards, Piccolo was the WSSAAA Athletic Director of the Year in 1999 and the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPHERD) National Athletic Director of the Year in 2000. He received the NIAAA State Award of Merit in 1999 and the NFHS Citation in 2003. He also has been inducted into the WSSAAA Hall of Fame and the AAHPHERD Hall of Fame.

Piccolo earned his bachelor's degree from Washington State University and his master's from Idaho State University.

Sam Rasmussen, CAA, Valparaiso, Indiana

Sam Rasmussen, CAA, served as the director of athletics for Valparaiso (Indiana) High School for 25 years before stepping down prior to the 2011–12 school year. He was chair of the Duneland Athletic Conference (DAC) five times, established and implemented the All–Academic DAC program and developed the DAC's procedures and guidelines for sport bylaw change proposals. Rasmussen also initiated the DAC's Sportsmanship Summit.

In addition to having been the DAC chair for swimming, diving and basketball, Rasmussen also instituted girls soccer, softball, freshman boys baseball and athletic training at Valparaiso. He established the school's athletic hall of fame and was a member of the school corporation substance abuse team as well. Rasmussen was also

the program director at Onseyawa Handicapped Children Camp and the developer of Camp Pocohaca Handicapped Children Camp.

At the state level, Rasmussen has been the tournament director for more than 500 Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) sectional, regional and semi-state tournaments in 20 sports. He also was a member of the IHSAA Football Realignment Committee and helped institute a new athletic directors workshop in conjunction with the IHSAA.

Rasmussen has devoted many hours of service to the Indiana Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (IIAAA), including serving as the president in 2004–05. He also held the positions of first vice president, second vice president and professional development chairperson. Rasmussen was also the IIAAA Gymnastics Sport Proposal Chairperson and the founder of the IIAAA Scholarship Program.

Rasmussen was a tremendous contributor to the NIAAA throughout his career at Valparaiso. He was a member of the Board of Directors for five years, including a year as president in 2009, and he has been a state coordinator for the Leadership Training Institute (LTI) since its inception in Indiana. He also assisted in four NIAAA leadership training summit institutes, and has been a CAA test administrator since 1998.

Rasmussen served as a member of the Indiana Host Committee and a chairperson for the Technology Committee for the 2003 National Athletic Directors Conference. He was an NIAAA delegate from 1999 to 2005.

Joseph Sanfilippo, CMAA, Cleveland, Georgia

Joseph Sanfilippo, CMAA, has made an impact in many organizations during his successful career in education. Sanfilippo spent the majority of his career at H.V. Jenkins High School in Savannah, Georgia, as a coach for baseball, soccer, basketball,

cross country, football, golf and softball. He became the school's athletic director in 1984 and remained there until 2006 when he became athletic director at White County High School in Cleveland, Georgia.

During his 18 years as girls softball coach, Sanfilippo enjoyed tremendous success. He was named Georgia Guardian and Hollis Stacy Softball Coach of the Year in 1997 and Georgia Guardian Softball Coach of the Year in 1999.

Sanfilippo served as the Region 3AAAAA vice president from 2004 to 2006 and has hosted Region 3AAAAA tournaments for basketball, tennis, track and volleyball multiple times. Sanfilippo also holds the position of committee chair on the White County High School Athletic Hall of Fame Committee and developed a brochure for parents, athletes and coaches that is currently being used by the Savannah Chatham County School System.

Sanfilippo has been on the Georgia Athletic Directors Association (GADA) Board of Directors for 10 years and has been a member of the organization for 20 years. He was GADA president in 2007 and vice president in 2006. He is also the GADA's membership chair, conference golf chair and NIAAA liaison. In addition, Sanfilippo is a member of the GADA's Retired Athletic Directors Committee and Strategic Planning Committee.

Sanfilippo, a 17-year member of the NIAAA, has participated in 16 National Athletic Directors Conferences. The NIAAA Leadership Training Institute (LTI) instructor for the GADA, Sanfilippo was an LTI facilitator during the 2009 National Athletic Directors Conference in Dallas. Sanfilippo served on the NIAAA Credentials Committee from 2000 to 2005 and from 2008 to present. He was also Georgia's NIAAA delegate for the conference each year from 2007 to 2009. Sanfilippo earned his CAA certification in 1994 and his CMAA in 2004.

Sanfilippo earned his bachelor's degree from Southwestern (Kansas) College and his master's from Florida State University.

Bob Trahern, CAA, Canon City, Colorado

Bob Trahern, CAA, has served in a variety of positions at Canon City (Colorado) High School since 1990. Trahern was boys basketball coach for nine years and physical education teacher/department chair for 12 years before assuming the athletic/activities director position in 2002.

In addition to leading the athletic department, Trahern is responsible for directing the band, choir, speech and debate, drama, Junior ROTC, drill and Student Council programs.

During his time of service to the South Central League, Trahern has been the group's commissioner for girls soccer, boys soccer, girls basketball and boys basketball (2002–present); wrestling (2002–09); and football (2010–present).

Trahern has played a prominent role in the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) as well. He has served on the CHSAA Executive Committee, Sportsmanship Committee, and Tournament and Playoff Finance Committee. Trahern also has been a site director for numerous CHSAA district, regional and state events.

Trahern has been a member of the Colorado Athletic Directors Association (CADA) since 2002 and a board member since 2007. He is currently serving a two-year term as president–elect. As a CADA board member for the organization, Trahern has served on the outreach, conference, communications and executive committees.

An NIAAA member for nine years, Trahern has attended all National Athletic Directors Conferences since 2002. He served as an NIAAA delegate for Colorado in

2007 and as a session moderator in 2010. He has also been a member of the NIAAA Awards Committee since 2009.

Trahern earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Southern Colorado and his master's from the University of Colorado–Colorado Springs.

Biographical profiles for this press release were written by Shane Monaghan, a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications and Events Departments, and Colin Likas, a fall intern in the NFHS Publications/Communications Department and a sophomore at Butler (Indiana) University.

About the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA)

The NIAAA is the largest national organization for high school athletic administrators with more than 8,500 individual members. The NIAAA consists of athletic director organizations in the 50 states plus the District of Columbia and provides an efficient system for exchange of ideas between the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and state athletic administrators organizations as well as individual athletic administrators. The NIAAA, located in Indianapolis, Indiana, strives to preserve the educational nature of interscholastic athletics and the place of these programs in the curricula of schools. The NIAAA is a full and equal partner with the NFHS.

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 performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing 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 7.6 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity

programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; 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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