

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

NFHS Awards Citations to Eight Athletic Directors

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bruce Howard

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (December 8, 2014) — The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) will award NFHS Citations to eight high school athletic directors December 15 in National Harbor, Maryland, during luncheon festivities at the 45th annual National Athletic Directors Conference sponsored jointly by the NFHS and the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA).

NFHS Citations are presented annually to outstanding athletic directors in recognition of contributions to interscholastic athletics at the local, state and national levels. State associations nominate athletic directors for NFHS Citations, and the NFHS Board of Directors approves recipients.

This year's award winners are David Ball, CMAA, athletic director, Clyde A. Erwin High School, Asheville, North Carolina; Stephanie Blackwell, CAA, athletic director, Bixby (Oklahoma) High School; Bruce Bowen, CMAA, executive director, Virginia Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association; John Dibble, CMAA, athletic director, Rite of Passage Schools, Yerington, Nevada; Alfred "Bunky" Dow, CAA, student activities director, Mt. Desert (Maine) High School; Sandy Freres, CMAA, athletic administrator, The Prairie School, Racine, Wisconsin; Todd Gilkey, CAA, assistant principal/activities director, Coeur d'Alene (Idaho) High School; and Dory Smith, former athletic director, Villa Duchesne School, St. Louis, Missouri.

Following are biographical sketches on this year's NFHS Citation recipients:

David Ball, CMAA, Asheville, North Carolina

David Ball, CMAA, has spent his entire 35-year professional career as a teacher, coach and athletic director at his alma mater – Clyde A. Erwin High School in Asheville, North Carolina. After graduating from Erwin High School in 1975, Ball earned his bachelor's degree from Western Carolina University in 1979 and returned to Erwin that fall as a social studies teacher and baseball coach.

Ball coached the baseball team for 19 years before becoming the school's athletic director in 1998. He compiled a 286-160 record as the baseball coach and led his teams to 13 playoff appearances in 19 years, as well as nine conference championships. Ball's 1988 team was runner-up in the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) Class 3A State Baseball Championship.

Since moving into athletic administration 16 years ago, Ball has been involved extensively with the North Carolina Athletic Directors Association (NCADA), the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) and the NCHSAA. Ball is a past president of the NCADA and currently serves on the NCADA Awards Committee and Mentoring Committee. Among his contributions to the state association, Ball served four years on the NCHSAA Board of Directors and has hosted regional and sectional events in track and basketball.

At the national level, Ball has attended seven National Athletic Directors Conferences and was a member of the NIAAA Blue Ribbon Panel at the 2008 conference. He earned his Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) certification in 2002 and Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA) in 2004.

In addition to his coaching and administrative tasks, Ball was an NCHSAA baseball official for 13 years and officiated state championship events in 2001 and 2007.

Ball received the NCHSAA Citation Award in 2007 and the NIAAA State Award of Merit in 2009. This past year, he was named NCHSAA Athletic Director of the Year and NCHSAA "100 to Remember" Administrator. He also was the Region 8 recipient of the 2013 Charlie Adams Distinguished Service Award.

Stephanie Blackwell, CAA, Bixby, Oklahoma

Stephanie Blackwell, CAA, has been the athletic director at Bixby (Oklahoma) High School – her alma mater – for the past nine years after an outstanding 16-year career as a cheerleading coach in the Bixby Public Schools.

After her early days in gymnastics, Blackwell switched to cheerleading as a junior at Bixby High School and then had an outstanding four-year career at the University of Tulsa before returning to her high school alma mater as cheer coach. Blackwell's cheer squads at Bixby won two state coed cheer championships and finished second two other times. She also coached numerous all-state and all-American cheerleaders at Bixby and was coach of the East team at the 2003 All-State Games.

Blackwell served a two-year term as president of the Oklahoma Cheerleading Coaches Association (OCCA) and has served on the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association (OSSAA) Cheerleading Advisory Board since 2001. She also has served as a national judge at Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA) high school competitions.

Blackwell has received numerous Coach of the Year awards at the state level and was named National Spirit Coach of the Year in 2007 by the NFHS. She was a finalist for the same honor in 2008 by the National High School Athletic Coaches Association.

Currently, Blackwell directs the athletic program at Bixby – a community south of Tulsa. She oversees boys and girls athletics in grades 8-12 with 22 sports and 73 coaches and also leads the school's Athletic Leadership Council and Athletic Academic Academy. She is a former president and current secretary of the Oklahoma Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

In addition to her cheerleading contributions at the state level, Blackwell is a member of the OSSAA Athletic Directors Advisory Board. She also has hosted OSSAA regional and state championships at Bixby High School.

Nationally, Blackwell has been awarded the NIAAA State Award of Merit and is a current member of the NFHS Citizenship and Equity Committee.

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. He was responsible for more than \$1 million in facility improvements during his tenure.

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 the district 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 and currently serves on its Foundation Board and Hall of Fame Selection Committee.

In his work with the NIAAA, Bowen has served as a moderator at several National Athletic Directors Conferences and is a state Leadership Training Institute instructor. He is a member of the National Executive Directors Council (NEDC) and has represented sections two, three and four on the NEDC Executive Committee. He is currently the NEDC representative on the NIAAA Board of Directors and will be hosting the 2015 NEDC Summit in Williamsburg. Bowen is also the author of four articles for NIAAA publications.

Bowen has been a member of the NIAAA and VIAAA for 27 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 and the NIAAA Distinguished Service Award in 2011. 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.

John Dibble, CMAA, Yerington, Nevada

John Dibble, CMAA, has been athletic director of the Rite of Passage Schools in Nevada and California for the past 14 years. After many years as athletic administrator at the school in Yerington, Nevada, Dibble is also currently directing athletic programs at Sierra Ridge Academy/Rite of Passage High School in San Andreas, California, and the Qualifying Houses in Minden, Nevada. As director of the Rite of Passage Western Region athletic programs, Dibble hires, supervises and evaluates all coaches.

During his time at Rite of Passage, Dibble has been involved extensively with the Nevada Athletic Directors Association (NADA) and the Sac-Joaquin Section of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF). He has served on the NADA Steering Committee for 14 years and has made several presentations at the NADA state conference. He was selected Nevada State AA Athletic Director of the Year in 2000 and 2007.

Currently, Dibble is a member of the CIF Sac-Joaquin Section (CIF-SJS) Board of Managers representing the Central California Athletic Alliance and served on the CIF-SJS realignment process in 2005-06. He was selected as the CIF-SJS Athletic Director of the Year in 2010.

While athletic director at the Rite of Passage campus in Nevada, Dibble directed many Nevada Interscholastic Activities Association (NIAA) championship events. He was Northern AA League president in 2004-05 and served on numerous local and state committees.

Prior to joining the Rite of Passage Schools in 2000, Dibble was a teacher and coach in the Lyon County Schools in Yerington, Nevada, for 27 years. In his final five years, Dibble also assumed the duties of athletic director. Dibble won three NIAA state championships and was inducted into the Northern Nevada Track and Field Coaches Hall of Fame and the Northern Nevada Wrestling Coaches Association 100-Win Club.

Dibble, who earned his bachelor's degree from California State University, Northridge, has made presentations at the National Athletic Directors Conference and was selected Nevada's NIAAA State Award of Merit recipient in 2013. He is a certified coach education instructor through the American Sport Education Program and has instructed more than 100 Nevada and California coaches in six workshops.

Alfred "Bunky" Dow, CAA, Mt. Desert, Maine

Alfred "Bunky" Dow, CAA, has been student activities director at his alma mater – Mt. Desert (Maine) Island High School – for the past 24 years. Along the way, he has coached several sports and has devoted countless hours of service to the Maine Principals Association (MPA) and the Maine Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA).

Among his various coaching assignments, Dow was varsity baseball coach from 1988 to 2002. He also was an assistant football coach for seven years, freshman basketball coach for nine years and junior varsity girls soccer coach for two years.

As athletic director, Dow has led renovations to the school's gymnasium, track and tennis courts. He also established the school's hall of fame and the Mt. Desert Island Unsung Hero Award. Most recently, Dow was successful in gaining approval for the hiring of a full-time athletic trainer.

Dow has been secretary of the school's athletic conference for 22 years, as well as chair of the conference's Baseball, Softball, Cheer and Outdoor Track Committees.

At the state level, Dow has served on the MPA Cheering, Softball and Advisory Committees and is currently chair of the MPA Classification Committee. He also serves on the Sport Done Right Board and has been site director for state track and wrestling meets. Within the state athletic directors association, Dow is a member of the MIAAA Executive Committee and is currently the organization's associate director. He was MIAAA president in 2003-04.

Nationally, Dow has attended four National Athletic Directors Conferences and has completed 29 NIAAA Leadership Training Courses. This past April, Dow received the MIAAA Robert Lahey Athletic Administrator of the Year Award for the state of Maine. He earned his CAA designation in 1999 and received the NIAAA State Award of Merit in 2011. He also received a Special Achievement Award from the MIAAA.

After graduating from Mt. Desert High School in 1978, Dow earned his bachelor's degree from Husson College in Bangor, Maine.

Sandy Freres, CMAA, Racine, Wisconsin

A 41-year veteran of educational athletics in the state of Wisconsin, Sandy Freres, CMAA, has been a teacher, coach and athletic administrator at The Prairie School in Racine since 1981.

After graduating from the University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh, in 1973, Freres started her career at St. Joseph Academy in Green Bay, where she coached volleyball and basketball and launched the girls athletic program. She was appointed the girls sport coordinator at The University School of Milwaukee in 1978, and was field hockey and basketball coach for three years before moving to Racine. The St. Joseph girls basketball team was the first girls team to air on delayed television in Wisconsin.

Freres began her career at The Prairie School as the girls sport coordinator and was promoted to athletic administrator in 1984 – a position she has held now for 30 years. In addition to building a high school athletic program with 14 sports, Freres initiated a middle school program. As a result of her efforts, currently about 80 percent of high school and middle school students participate in one or more sports.

In 2003, Freres was part of a team that planned the Johnson Athletic Center, a state-of-the-art facility with three basketball courts, four volleyball courts, a suspended track, fitness center and tennis courts. This year, Freres was part of another team that developed The Ruud Family Soccer Complex, a premiere turf soccer stadium that opened September 3.

A past president of the former Wisconsin Independent School Athletic Association (WISAA), Freres was a member of the committee that united the public and private school associations in 2000. She has served on the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) Sports Advisory Committee and is currently co-chair of the State Ad Hoc Committee on Competitive Balance.

A member of the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association (WADA) and NIAAA for almost 30 years, Freres is an NIAAA Leading Training Institute instructor for the WADA and was a two-time Wisconsin delegate at the National Athletic Directors Conference.

Freres was named the 1997 WISAA Athletic Director of the Year and the 2008 WADA Athletic Director of the Year.

Todd Gilkey, CAA, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Now in his 15th year as a high school athletic administrator, Todd Gilkey, CAA, has served as the assistant principal and activities director at Coeur d'Alene (Idaho) High School since 2007. He began his education career as a teacher at St. Maries (Idaho) High School in 1992 and assumed the athletic director's duties in 1999.

Gilkey, who earned his bachelor's degree in 1992 and master's in 2002 from the University of Idaho, has hosted numerous Idaho High School Activities Association (IHSAA) state tournaments at Coeur d'Alene, including four volleyball tournaments, five soccer championships and more than 30 regional tournaments. Since 2011, Gilkey has been a member of the IHSAA Executive Board.

At the local level, Gilkey was president of the Intermountain League from 2004 to 2007 and president of the Inland Empire League from 2009 to 2010. He currently is awards chairman for the Inland Empire League.

Gilkey has had extensive involvement with the Idaho Athletic Administrators Association (IAAA), including 10 years as president-elect, president and past president. He also has spearheaded the IAAA's involvement with the NIAAA Leadership Training Institute and is an instructor for Leadership Training Class 501.

At the national level, Gilkey has attended all National Athletic Directors Conferences since 2007 and has served as the Idaho voting delegate on each occasion. He has been a member of the NIAAA Endowment Committee since 2008 and currently is second vice-chair, and he has been the NIAAA liaison for Idaho since 2011. Earlier this year, Gilkey was selected to serve on the fourth NIAAA Strategic Planning Committee. In addition, he has completed 22 NIAAA Leadership Training courses.

Among his previous honors, Gilkey was selected Idaho 3A Athletic Director of the Year in 2005 and Idaho 5A Athletic Director of the Year in 2010 and 2013.

Dory Smith, CMAA, St. Louis, Missouri

Dory Smith, CMAA, has been one of the leaders in athletic administration in the St. Louis area, as well as throughout the state of Missouri and nationally with the NIAAA, for the past 20 years.

Smith recently completed a nine-year tenure as athletic director at Villa Duchesne, a private girls school in St. Louis, after six years (1999-2005) as athletic director at The Principia, another private school based in St. Louis. Prior to serving as athletic director at The Principia, Smith was a physical education instructor at the school for five years and coached softball, basketball, soccer, field hockey, and swimming and diving.

Throughout her 15 years as athletic director at the two St. Louis schools, Smith has had extensive involvement with the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) and the Missouri Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA) at the state level, and nationally with the NIAAA.

Smith served on the MSHSAA Board of Appeals for eight years and has addressed the Missouri State Legislature two times on behalf of the MSHSAA – discussing eligibility and transfer issues in 2007 and home-school issues in January of this year. She also has been an NIAAA Leadership Training Institute instructor on six occasions at MSHSAA conferences and workshops.

Within the state athletic directors organization, Smith was chosen president-elect of the MIAAA in 2013 and has been a speaker at three MIAAA state conferences.

Nationally, Smith served a three-year term on the NIAAA Board of Directors from 2009 to 2012 and a six-year term on the NIAAA Credentials Committee from 2003 to 2009. She was recently appointed to the NIAAA Strategic Planning Committee and has written articles for the NIAAA's publication, Interscholastic Athletic Administration. Smith has regularly attended the NIAAA/NFHS National Athletic Directors Conference and has been a conference speaker five times.

Smith earned her Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) certification in 2004 and Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA) certification in 2007. She has completed 20 Leadership Training Classes within the NIAAA's Leadership Training Institute.

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 16 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 7.7 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 website at www.nfhs.org.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Bruce Howard, 317-972-6900
Director of Publications and Communications
National Federation of State High School Associations
bhoward@nfhs.org

Chris Boone, 317-972-6900
Assistant Director of Publications and Communications
National Federation of State High School Associations
cboone@nfhs.org