



## NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

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### Frank Kovaleski to Receive NIAAA Award of Merit

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (November 4, 2009) — **Frank Kovaleski**, CAA, former assistant director of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and director of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA), is the 2009 recipient of the NIAAA Award of Merit.

Kovaleski will receive his award December 15 in Dallas, Texas, during banquet festivities at the 40<sup>th</sup> annual National Athletic Directors Conference conducted jointly by the NFHS and NIAAA.

The Award of Merit is the most prestigious award presented by the NIAAA to an individual who has shown outstanding leadership in interscholastic athletics or related areas.

Kovaleski retired in 2005 after 16 years with the NFHS and NIAAA. A longtime Indiana high school athletic director and coach before joining the NFHS staff, Kovaleski

expanded professional development opportunities for high school athletic directors during his tenure as national director of the NIAAA.

Most significant among those opportunities was the creation of the NIAAA Leadership Training Program in 1996 and expansion of the NIAAA Certification Program in 1999. The Leadership Training Program has expanded to a current offering of 32 courses, and more than 30,000 courses have been completed by athletic directors at state, regional and national conferences since the program's inception 13 years ago. In 1999, two additional levels – the Registered Athletic Administrator (RAA) and Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA) – were added to the certification program.

In 2003, through Kovalski's efforts, the NIAAA formed an arrangement with Ohio University to offer a master's degree in athletic administration through online courses. He was responsible for starting the NIAAA Endowment in 1994.

Kovalski also played a significant role in the success of the National Athletic Directors Conference, which is held each December and annually attracts 1,500 to 2,000 high school athletic directors.

Prior to devoting full-time duties to the NIAAA and the national conference in 2002, Kovalski made significant contributions to the NFHS as the organization's meeting planner and as rules editor in track and field.

Kovalski brought a rich background in athletic administration to the NFHS in 1989, having served as a high school athletic director since 1965 in three different Indiana high schools. He began his career at Union City (Indiana) High School, followed by a five-year stint at Triton High School in Bourbon, Indiana. Kovalski was athletic director at New Castle (Indiana) High School for 15 years and at Richmond (Indiana)

High School for four years. During his years at the high school level, Kovaleski also coached track, football and tennis.

A graduate of Bicknell (Indiana) High School, Kovaleski earned his bachelor's degree in 1963 from Indiana State University, Terre Haute, and his master's in 1969 from St. Francis College in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Kovaleski had been involved with the NIAAA for a number of years prior to joining the NFHS staff. He served terms on the NFHS/NIAAA Athletic Directors Advisory Committee, the NIAAA Resolutions Committee and the NIAAA Professional Development Committee. At the state level, he was president of the Indiana Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association in 1979–80. He also was a part of the group that developed content for the first edition of “A Guide for College–Bound Student–Athletes and Their Parents.”

Among his honors, Kovaleski was Indiana high school athletic director of the year in 1981, and he received the NFHS Citation in 1987 and the NIAAA Distinguished Service Award in 2008. In addition, he was selected as team manager for the U.S. pre–Olympic basketball team that played in the Soviet Union in 1978.

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#### **About the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA)**

The NIAAA is the largest national organization for high school athletic administrators with more than 7,000 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. For more information, visit the NIAAA Web site at [www.niaaa.org](http://www.niaaa.org).

## **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](http://www.nfhs.org).

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