



## NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

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### 2010 NIAAA Hall of Fame Class Selected

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (November 18, 2010) — Nine high school athletic directors will be inducted into the second Hall of Fame class of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) December 19 in Orlando, Florida, during banquet festivities at the 41<sup>st</sup> annual National Athletic Directors Conference co-sponsored by the NIAAA and the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

This year's conference will be held at the Orlando World Center Marriott Resort in Orlando, Florida.

The 2010 NIAAA Hall of Fame class includes **Joel Eskelsen**, CAA, Unicoi, Tennessee (retired from Wyoming); **John Klement**, Monona, Wisconsin; **Duane Kramer**, CMAA, Sun Lakes, Arizona (retired from Iowa); **Robert Lahey** (deceased), Old Town, Maine; **Kurby Lyle** (deceased), Englewood, Colorado; **Clarence Noe** (deceased), Pompano Beach, Florida; **Walter Sargent**, CAA, Yarmouthport, Massachusetts; **Don**

**Sparks**, Siesta Key, Florida (retired from Missouri); and **Les Wright**, CAA, Borden, Indiana.

Following are biographical sketches of the nine members of the 2010 NIAAA Hall of Fame class:

### **Joel Eskelsen, CAA, Wyoming**

Joel Eskelsen retired as the activities director at Big Piney (Wyoming) High School in 2008 after a distinguished career in Nebraska and Wyoming as both a coach and athletic administrator.

In addition to his 29 years in athletic administration, Eskelsen was a highly successful football and track coach. In his 33 years as a football coach, Eskelsen won 204 games and led his teams to six state championships while continuing to handle the athletic director's duties. He also coached track and field teams to five state championships.

Eskelsen's service at the national level includes five years on the NIAAA Board of Directors, including a term as president in 2004. He served as the Wyoming Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (WIAAA) state liaison to the NIAAA for eight years and during his presidency, was instrumental in the search for the first NIAAA executive director. He also currently serves on the NIAAA Endowment Committee.

At the state level, Eskelsen helped create an outstanding working relationship among the WIAAA, the Wyoming Coaches Association (WCA) and the Wyoming High School Activities Association. He served on the WIAAA Board of Directors for 20 years, and as president of the WCA, he was instrumental in combining the athletic directors

conference and the coaches conference. Locally, Eskelsen was president of the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference, where he was the conference coordinator for regional championships in basketball and track.

Eskelsen, who earned his bachelor's degree from Dana (Nebraska) College and his master's from Wayne (Nebraska) State College, was twice awarded an NIAAA State Award of Merit (in 1991 and 1999), received an NIAAA Distinguished Service Award in 2006, and was presented an NFHS Citation in 2005. He also has been inducted into the Wyoming Coaches Association Hall of Fame, and was selected WIAAA Athletic Director of the Year in 1994 and 2008.

Among his coaching honors, Eskelsen was named National Football Coach of the Year in 2003 and was inducted into the National High School Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2006.

### **John Klement, Wisconsin**

John Klement retired in 1988 after an exemplary 36-year career as an athletic director, coach and official in Wisconsin. He spent his entire career at Monona (Wisconsin) Grove High School, where the athletic field is named in his honor.

Klement also coached high school track, football, basketball, volleyball and wrestling at various points from 1951 to 1985 and also officiated many of those sports. He officiated track and field for 40 years, volleyball for 32, basketball for 30 and football for 20. He was commissioner of the Badger Conference for 39 years and served as the athletic director representative to the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association Board of Control.

Klement was named Monona Grove's athletic director before construction on the new school was completed, and he oversaw the creation of the school's athletic facilities to become some of the state's finest. During his long tenure at the school, Klement built a program of 21 sports and created the Monona Grove Invitational Track Meet in 1960, which continues today as one of the state's top invitational track meets.

Amazingly, Klement was executive director of the Wisconsin Track and Field Association for 45 years, and he was a member of the NFHS Track and Field Rules Committee from 1970 to 1976. He received the prestigious NFHS Citation Award in 1971 - the first year the awards were presented to athletic directors.

In 1965, Klement helped organize and conduct the first statewide, all-girls invitational track meet in Wisconsin. Monona Grove hosted the meet, in addition to the Monona Grove Invitational.

Klement, who earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin, made numerous significant contributions to the NIAAA and NFHS. He was a member of the Organizing Committee that developed the bylaws and constitution and laid the groundwork for the formation of the national professional organization. Klement was on the committee that designed the NIAAA logo and served as a member of the Board of Directors from 1978 to 1982, including a term as president in 1980-81. He also served six years on the National High School Hall of Fame Screening Committee.

Klement was named Wisconsin Athletic Director of the Year in 1974 and received the NIAAA Award of Merit in 1984. He is also a 1994 inductee into the Wisconsin Track and Field Hall of Fame.

**Duane Kramer, CMAA, Iowa**

Duane Kramer retired in 2002 after an outstanding 38-year career in interscholastic athletics in the state of Iowa. He continues to be a leader in the professional development of athletic administrators as a member of the NIAAA Leadership Training Institute Executive Committee, and he continues to work with students as supervisor of student teachers at Arizona State University.

Kramer, who earned his bachelor's degree from Buena Vista (Iowa) University and his master's from Drake (Iowa) University, spent his entire career in Iowa, beginning as a coach and teacher in 1965 before becoming the athletic director at Cedar Rapids (Iowa) LaSalle High School from 1968 to 1976. He also coached the boys basketball team at LaSalle, where he had the state's No. 1-ranked squads during the 1970-71 and 1974-75 seasons. He was honored as Metro Basketball Coach of the Year in 1975.

In addition to his current role on the NIAAA Leadership Training Institute Executive Committee, Kramer has had a longtime involvement with the NIAAA. He previously served on the Board of Directors from 1994 to 1998 and was president in 1997. He also served on the NIAAA Strategic Planning Committee in 2000-01 and is a lifetime member of the organization. Kramer has completed 30 NIAAA Leadership Training Courses.

From 1977 to 1991, Kramer was the activities director at Cedar Rapids (Iowa) Washington High School before becoming the district athletic director in 1991. Kramer served as president of the Iowa High School Athletic Directors Association (IHSADA) in 1980-81 and in 1982 was named the State of Iowa Athletic Director of the Year. In 2004, the IHSADA inducted Kramer into its Hall of Fame.

Kramer received an NIAAA State Award of Merit in 1996, the Iowa High School Athletic Association Bernie Saggau Award of Merit in 1999 and an NFHS Citation in

2000. The mayor of Cedar Rapids officially proclaimed April 17, 2002, as “Duane Kramer Day” in Cedar Rapids.

### **Robert Lahey Jr., Maine**

The late Robert Lahey Jr. was a founding father of the Maine Interscholastic Athletic Directors Association (MIADA) in 1972 and served as the association’s executive director from 1974 until his untimely death in 1994. He was a pioneer in the state in bringing respect and support to the profession and worked hard to unify Maine’s athletic administrators.

Lahey, who earned his bachelor’s degree from St. Mary’s University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, was responsible for the organization of the MIADA’s fall and spring conferences from 1976 to 1993.

At the national level, Lahey was NIAAA president (1992) and a recipient of an NFHS Citation (1988). He was elected to the NIAAA Board of Directors in 1989 and served as chairperson of the Ways and Means Committee. Lahey received an NIAAA State Award of Merit in 1989 and was posthumously conferred an NIAAA Distinguished Service Award in 1995.

Lahey was the athletic director at Old Town (Maine) High School from 1974 to 1993. During his tenure, he was instrumental in adding numerous sports to the school’s athletic program, including field hockey, ice hockey, tennis, boys and girls soccer, girls cross country, and girls indoor track. In 1982, he was recognized as the Maine Athletic Director of the Year, an award which is now named in Lahey’s honor. He also coached Old Town’s boys basketball team from 1972 to 1978.

Lahey assisted with many functions of the Maine Principals’ Association, serving as the MIADA liaison from 1977 to 1993, as well as being a member of its

reclassification and sports season policy committees. He also was the co-creator of the Maine Center for Coaching Education, which remains a significant component of high school athletics in the state.

### **Kurby Lyle, Colorado**

The late Kurby Lyle was one of the top athletic directors in Colorado sports history during his stellar 36-year career with the Cherry Creek School District in Englewood, Colorado. Lyle was boys basketball coach for 12 years at Cherry Creek High School before becoming athletic director in 1967. He later served 15 years as the district athletic and activities director before retiring in 1991.

Beyond his impressive contributions at the local level, Lyle was among the founding fathers of both the Colorado Athletic Directors Association (CADA) and the NIAAA. He was instrumental in the formation of the CADA in 1974, and he was a charter member of the NIAAA in 1977.

In response to his efforts in nurturing the NIAAA in its early years, Lyle was bestowed many national honors, including the NFHS Citation in 1984, the NIAAA Distinguished Service Award in 1987, the NIAAA State Award of Merit in 1989 and the Thomas E. Frederick Award of Excellence in 1993. He was among the first 24 individuals inducted into the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) Hall of Fame.

Upon his retirement in 1991, Lyle became the first recipient of the CADA Distinguished Service Award, and Cherry Creek High School named its gymnasium in his honor. After helping form the CADA in 1974, Lyle was a member for 24 years and served a term as president. He was the CADA Athletic Director of the Year in 1988.

Lyle's contributions to the CHSAA were also exemplary. He chaired the CHSAA Basketball Committee and the CHSAA State Basketball Championship Committee, and served for 10 years on the CHSAA Board of Control. During his time as chair of the Basketball Committee, Lyle led the charge for the explosion of girls basketball and the growth to a 64-team bracket in Classes 4A and 5A.

Lyle, who earned his bachelor's degree from Northwest Missouri State University and his master's from the University of Colorado, chaired the NIAAA Political Action Committee for nine years and was a moderator and presenter at numerous National Athletic Directors Conferences. In addition to boys basketball, Lyle also coached cross country for six years, and track and field for three years.

#### **Dr. Clarence Noe, Florida**

The late Dr. Clarence Noe was one of the early leaders in the athletic administration field in Florida during his 25 years with the Broward County School District.

Noe, who earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Indiana University and his doctorate from Nova (Florida) University, was the county athletic director from 1972 until his retirement in 1996. During the same time, Noe was executive director of the Broward County Gulfstream Middle School Athletic Conference, and he authored the Broward County Athletic Association (BCAA) Constitution and Bylaws for the high schools.

Noe started his career at Lexington (Indiana) High School, where he coached boys basketball, cross country and baseball, and was the athletic director. After moving to Florida in 1957, Noe coached at Fort Lauderdale (Florida) Stranahan High School,



where he was active in the Florida Athletic Coaches Association. He was a charter board member of the Broward County chapter of the Brian Piccolo Football Hall of Fame.

Within the state, Noe was the first president of the Broward County Track and Field Association in 1970, and he served a term as president of the Florida Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association.

Noe was head referee for the Florida High School Boys and Girls State Track Meets for 30 years. He was inducted into the Florida High School Track Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1990 and the Florida High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame in 1996. In 2006, he was awarded the Jimmy Carnes Lifetime Achievement Award for Track and was commissioner of the BCAA conference from 1978 to 1996.

Nationally, Noe was the fourth NIAAA president in 1983, and he was a presenter at numerous National Athletic Directors Conferences.

### **Walter Sargent, CAA, Massachusetts**

Through his 40 years of dedicated service to high school athletics and activities, Walter Sargent has truly impacted the lives of thousands of coaches and student-athletes.

Sargent, who earned his bachelor's degree from Springfield (Massachusetts) College and his master's from Salem (Massachusetts) State College, worked for four different high schools during his distinguished career, starting as a head football coach and physical education instructor at North Reading (Massachusetts) High School. He served as the director of athletics and physical education for five years at Haverhill (Massachusetts) Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School and as the director of athletics, physical education and health at Lexington (Massachusetts) Minuteman Regional Science and Technology High School.

Sargent closed his school-based career in 2001 after 12 years as director of athletics at the Brookline Public Schools, where he administered the largest systemwide athletic program in the eastern half of the United States.

Sargent currently serves as president of WLS Sports Marketing, Inc., a company he started in 2000. In that capacity, he serves as director of marketing for the NIAAA, director of development for the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, executive director of the Massachusetts Secondary Schools Athletic Directors Association (MSSADA), and general chairman and exhibit coordinator of the MSSADA's annual convention (in his 31<sup>st</sup> year). Sargent's vision and dedication have helped the MSSADA state conference become one of the largest and most productive in the country.

Sargent was a founding member of the National Executive Directors' Council (NEDC) and has been the NEDC chief financial officer since 2002. He has been the state's liaison to the NIAAA since 1983, and he served on the NIAAA Board of Directors from 1993 to 1996. He was elected president of the National Council of Secondary School Athletic Directors (NCSSAD) in 1990-91 after serving a year as vice president and was chosen NCSSAD Athletic Director of the Year in 2002. He also currently serves on the NIAAA Endowment Committee.

Sargent has been featured on ABC's "20/20" and ESPN, has spoken at numerous conferences and conventions, and has been inducted into four halls of fame. Sargent is the recipient of many awards and distinctions, including the NIAAA Distinguished Service Award and NIAAA State Award of Merit in 1988, an NFHS Citation in 2000, the NIAAA Award of Merit in 2005 and the MSSADA President's Meritorious Service Award.

**Don Sparks, Missouri**

A charter member and one of the organizers of the NIAAA, Don Sparks retired in 1998 after a standout 40-year career in interscholastic athletic administration. Sparks, who has attended all 40 previous National Athletic Directors Conferences, is the only individual to have been inducted into the NFHS National High School Hall of Fame and to have received NFHS Citations for athletic directors, coaches and officials.

Sparks was involved in creating several state and national organizations in interscholastic athletics. He was one of the founders of the Missouri Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association at the state level, as well as the NIAAA, the National High School Hall of Fame, the NFHS Coaches Association and the NFHS Officials Association at the national level.

In addition, Sparks also was involved in starting professional magazines for high school coaches and officials in 1996 – the NFHS Coaches' Quarterly and the NFHS Officials' Quarterly – and a national conference for high school coaches and officials in 1987.

From 1959 to 1976, Sparks held a variety of positions for the St. Louis (Missouri) Parkway Secondary Schools, including football, basketball and baseball coach; athletic director; and physical education director. He created a permanent districtwide Principals' Athletic Council and Student Advisory Board that held joint monthly meetings to assess athletics programs.

In 1976, Sparks joined the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) as an assistant executive director, and two years later became the association's first associate executive director. Sparks served as supervisor of officials, and launched a statewide educational campaign to improve relations among the public and officials, coaches and administrators.

Sparks was an assistant director of the NFHS from 1981 to 1998. During that time, he administered the NFHS Coaches and Officials Associations and established a coaches education program and the Officials Equipment Center. He also administered the sports of soccer and swimming.

In addition to his three NFHS Citations and National High School Hall of Fame induction, Sparks was inducted into the Greater St. Louis Athletic Association Hall of Fame in 1976. In addition, he has received distinguished service awards from Northeast Missouri State University, the National Intercollegiate Soccer Officials Association and the NIAAA.

### **Les Wright, CAA, Indiana**

Les Wright served as the athletic director and director of student activities at Floyds Knobs (Indiana) Floyd Central Junior–Senior High School for 26 years before retiring in 1996. Wright was a state and national leader in athletic administration through his work with the Indiana Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (IIAAA) and the NIAAA.

After eight years as a teacher and assistant coach, Wright assumed the athletic director duties at Floyd Central in 1970 and took a boys–only athletic program with eight sports and 18 teams in grades 7–12, to a full program of 10 boys sports and 10 girls sports with 66 teams in grades 7–12. The high school’s 40–acre outdoor athletic complex is named in Wright’s honor.

At the state level, Wright was appointed to the IIAAA Board of Directors in only his second year at Floyd Central. He served on the Board for 12 years and was president during the 1978–79 school year. The IIAAA honored Wright as District V

Athletic Director of the Year twice, and he received the Charles E. Maas Distinguished Service Award for District V.

Wright, who earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees from Indiana University, worked as a track and cross country official for the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) and is a 30-year member of both the IHSAA Officials Association and the NFHS Officials Association.

Nationally, Wright has devoted countless hours to the NIAAA and remains active today in his fifth term as the chairperson of the NIAAA Retired Athletic Directors Committee. He never missed a National Athletic Directors Conference during his 26 years at Floyd Central, and was a member of the National Conference Registration Committee for 22 years.

Wright served on the NFHS Athletic Directors Advisory Committee and assisted in organizing three National Athletic Directors Conferences. Wright has also served on the NIAAA Board of Directors and on its Endowment and Publications Committees. A lifetime NIAAA member, Wright was in the first class to earn Certified Athletic Administrator status in 1988.

Wright received an NFHS Citation in 1980, and he was the recipient of an NIAAA Distinguished Service Award in 1984 and the NIAAA Thomas E. Frederick Award of Excellence in 1998.

**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.

### **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 7.6 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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