



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

9100 Keystone Crossing, Suite 650

Indianapolis, IN 46240

317-587-1450, FAX 317-587-1451 www.niaaa.org

Mike Blackburn to Become NIAAA Executive Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bruce Whitehead

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (September 14, 2015) — Dr. Mike Blackburn, CMAA, has been selected executive director of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA), effective July 1, 2016. Blackburn, who has served as NIAAA associate executive director for the past 10 years, will succeed Bruce Whitehead, CMAA, who will retire June 30, 2016, after directing the NIAAA since 2005.

Before joining the Indianapolis-based NIAAA, the national leadership organization for high school and middle school athletic administrators in the United States, Blackburn was assistant principal/director of athletics at Northwestern High School in Kokomo, Indiana, for 28 years. A graduate of Indiana State University, Blackburn also earned his master's degree and a Ph.D. in educational administration from Indiana State.

"The Board of Directors felt strongly that there is no other individual better equipped and prepared to succeed Bruce Whitehead as executive director than Mike Blackburn," said NIAAA President Trish Witkin. "He has a great respect and appreciation for the history of the organization. His vision and passion for the NIAAA is evident in all he does. The NIAAA and its entire membership will continue to thrive under his leadership."

Blackburn's association with the NIAAA spans his entire athletic administration career. He was a member of the NIAAA Publications Committee from 1994 to 2005, serving stints as both vice-chair and chair. He was also a member of the inaugural NIAAA Strategic Planning Committee in 2000 and served a term on the NFHS National Conference Advisory Committee prior to being named the first NIAAA associate executive director in 2005. Blackburn became a Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) in 1989, and he earned Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA) status in 2001.

Thanks in large part to Blackburn's leadership, the NIAAA's membership has grown by more than 75 percent the past 10 years after gaining North Central Association CASI accreditation in 2001. The Leadership Training Institute curriculum has expanded by 14 courses to a total of 40 and the NIAAA Certification Program now provides four levels.

Blackburn served as one of the editors of the *NIAAA's Guide to Interscholastic Athletic Administration* published in 2013. As editor of *Interscholastic Athletic Administration*, Blackburn has been instrumental in the growth of that magazine, which has doubled in size to a 64-page quarterly. In addition, he has helped implement several new initiatives, including the NIAAA Hall of Fame, the Student Essay/Scholarship Program and an international presence for those athletic directors working in American schools globally. He also played key roles in the moving of the national office, the addition of new staff and three strategic plans.

"The NIAAA is a vibrant organization and I am confident it will continue to grow and enhance service to its members under Mike's leadership," said Executive Director Bruce Whitehead. "His excellent leadership skills will serve him well in his role as executive director."

During his days as an athletic director, Blackburn served the Indiana Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (IIAAA) and the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA) in numerous capacities. He was a member of the IIAAA Board of Directors from 1992 to 2005, including a term as president, and was the permanent secretary from 1996 to 2005. He also was the representative to the National Executive Directors Council (NEDC) and coordinated the book, *Travel Guide to Indiana Schools*. He was elected to two terms on the IHSAA Board of Directors, during which he served as vice-president, as well as vice-chair of the Executive Committee and the hearing review panel.

Blackburn has received the NIAAA Award of Merit, NIAAA Distinguished Service Award, National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Citation, NIAAA Commendation, NIAAA State Award of Merit and Indiana Association of Educational Office Professional (IAEOP) Administrator of the Year. He was IIAAA Athletic Director of the Year, and the National Council of Secondary Schools Athletic Administrators (NCSSAD) Midwest Athletic Director of the Year. He has been inducted into the National Association of Sports and Physical Education (NASPE) Presidential Hall of Fame, and the Northwestern High School Hall of Fame.

"It has been my privilege to serve the NIAAA under the leadership of Bruce Whitehead, an excellent professional model, mentor and friend. I am humbled by this appointment and consider it privilege to work with and serve the NIAAA membership," Blackburn said. "The growth and strength of the NIAAA finds its foundation in member volunteerism and selflessness, a spirit of service and integrity and dedication to what is right for students and their school."

He and wife, Brenda, have three grown children with families that include seven grandchildren.

MEDIA CONTACT: Bruce Whitehead
317-587-1450
Bwhitehead@niaaa.org

About the NIAAA: The NIAAA is based in Indianapolis, Indiana, and is the national leadership organization for high school and middle school athletic administrators. With current individual membership of nearly 10,000 the NIAAA consists of athletic administrators from associations in the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Internationally. The NIAAA leads in providing professional development for athletic administrators, serving as a resource and provider of safe and plentiful participation opportunities for the nation's 7.8 million student-athletes. With conducting education-based athletic programs as the focus, NIAAA membership provides opportunity for professional development, education, certification, national award recognition and exchange of ideas with athletic administrators throughout the world.

NIAAA champions the profession of athletic administration through education opportunities, advocating ethics, developing leaders and fostering community.