



## NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

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### Jim Baker to Receive NIAAA Award of Excellence

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (November 29, 2007) — Jim Baker, CAA, former athletic administrator of the Richfield (Minnesota) Public Schools, is the 2007 recipient of the Thomas E. Frederick Award of Excellence presented by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA).

Baker will receive the NIAAA Award of Excellence December 17 in Nashville, Tennessee during luncheon festivities at the 38<sup>th</sup> annual National Conference of High School Directors of Athletics conducted jointly by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the NIAAA.

The Thomas E. Frederick Award of Excellence is a prestigious award presented each year to an NIAAA member whose loyalty to the association and contributions to the profession represent excellence in achievement.

The award is named after the late Thomas E. Frederick, who served as NFHS assistant and associate director for 22 years before his retirement in 1989. Frederick

was responsible for starting the National Conference of High School Directors of Athletics in 1971 as well as the NIAAA in 1977.

**Jim Baker** has spent his entire life and career in his home state of Minnesota. After graduating from Rochester Lourdes High School, Baker earned degrees at both Rochester Community College and Winona State University.

In 1971, he began his career at Mora Public Schools, and three years later, moved to the Albert Lea Public Schools. From 1984 to 1999, he was at Lake City Public Schools, and from 1999 to 2005, he was at Richfield Public Schools.

A former wrestling coach, Baker has continued to be highly involved with the sport. Since 1976, he has been the weigh-in coordinator at the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) state wrestling tournament, co-managed the tournament the past six years, was state tournament floor manager for 11 years, and was meet manager at both the subsection and section levels for many years.

Among the various committees on which he has served, Baker has been on the MSHSL Football Realignment Advisory Committee, the MSHSL Representative Assembly, and the Athletic Directors Advisory Committee to the MSHSL.

At the statewide level, Baker served as second vice president, first vice president and president of the Minnesota Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA). He was president of the Minnesota State High School Coaches Association in 2000-01, and received the George Haun Award from that organization in 2003.

Since 1998, Baker has been highly involved with the NIAAA Leadership Training Program at both the state and national levels. From 2000 to 2004, he was the Section V representative on the NIAAA Board of Directors.

Among his other recognitions, Baker was given the MSHSL Award of Merit, the Richfield Chamber of Commerce Sports Award, the Minnesota Region 6AA Athletic

Administrator of the Year Award and an NIAAA Distinguished Service Award, all in 2004. In addition, he was named MIAAA Class AA Athletic Administrator of the Year in 2005, and was inducted into the MIAAA Hall of Fame a year later.

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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 6,000 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 18,500 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7 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).