



NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

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John Olson to receive first NIAAA Frank Kovaleski Professional Development Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (November 29, 2007) — **John Olson**, CMAA, longtime athletic administrator from the Madison (Wisconsin) Metropolitan School District, is the first recipient of the inaugural Frank Kovaleski Professional Development Award presented by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA).

The Frank Kovaleski Professional Development Award is presented each year to an NIAAA member who possesses and has contributed to the vision of professional development – the legacy of Frank Kovaleski – and who has made significant contributions and demonstrated excellence in professional development at the local, state and national levels. Kovaleski was director of the NIAAA, as well as assistant director of the NFHS, from 1989 until his retirement in January 2005. He was responsible for starting the NIAAA Leadership Training Program in 1996 and expanding the NIAAA Certification Program in 1999.

Olson, one of the most respected high school athletic administrators in the United States who was inducted into the National High School Hall of Fame in 2000, retired from the Madison (Wisconsin) Metropolitan School District in 1998. In an exemplary career there that spanned 39 years, Olson taught science and physical education, coached football, and served as high school athletic director, assistant principal, district administrator of athletics and assistant superintendent of the school district.

A lifelong resident of Madison, Olson attended grade school, junior high school and senior high school there. He then attended the University of Wisconsin, where he majored in biology, general science and physical education. While there, he rowed on the UW crew team and was a member of the national championship Badgers team in 1959.

That same year, he graduated with the first of his three degrees from the Madison campus, and subsequently joined the Madison School District.

Initially assigned as a general science teacher with coaching assignments in football, basketball and track at Central High School, Olson helped open James Madison Memorial High School in 1967, where he was head football coach and athletic director. At Memorial, Olson's teams won several conference championships.

In 1974, Olson moved fulltime into school administration, and from 1980 to 1987, he taught in the University of Wisconsin School of Education. Olson then returned to the Madison Schools as assistant superintendent, and district administrator for security services and athletics programs.

In addition to his heavy involvement with the Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association and the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, Olson made enormous contributions to the National Federation of State High School Associations

and the NIAAA. One of his key contributions in that regard has been in the field of writing.

Olson served on the NIAAA Publications Committee for 13 years, during which time he developed and published 90 articles and research pieces for the Interscholastic Athletic Administration journal and began development of the Leadership Training Program.

Olson also was a contributing editor and moderator for the annual Blue Ribbon Panel discussion of contemporary issues and problems at the National Conference of High School Directors of Athletics.

Olson is also the chief writer and editor of “Athletic Administrators Reference Manual,” a comprehensive resource book of the best practices and state-of-the-art professional methods and strategies for athletic administrators.

Along the same time, Olson also maintained active military reserve status and was activated for Operation Desert Storm (1990) and Operation Uphold Democracy (1994).

Appointed as NIAAA Director of Curriculum in 1998, Olson has since authored 13 Leadership Training courses and edited all 30 of the courses currently available to NIAAA members.

Among his recognitions, Olson has been inducted into the National Council of Secondary School Athletic Administrators Hall of Fame, the Madison Sports Hall of Fame and the Wisconsin High School Football Coaches Hall of Fame. He also is the recipient of both the NIAAA Award of Merit and the NFHS Citation.

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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.