

Community Service



NFHS photo by Don Fisher, Jr.

The MIAA firmly believes that each student-athlete across the Commonwealth serves as a **role model**. When on the field of play, these student-athletes are placed in the spotlight and every action that they take has an impact upon those around them. **They are looked up to for their athletic talents, however they have the ability to make an even greater impact upon others with their actions off the playing field.** This impact comes in the power of influence that they share as visible figures in and out of the school setting. The efforts that these students make to give back to the community go a long way in influencing others to make a difference.

For student-athletes, participating in interscholastic athletics is a privilege. The privilege of participation has been granted to them by those who have taken the time to teach skills and perform the necessary tasks through the years that provide student-athletes with the opportunity to enjoy athletics. Being granted the privilege of athletic participation comes with many great responsibilities. Among these responsibilities is showing respect for the opportunities that they have been afforded and providing

service so that others can have the same opportunities. Giving back to the community is what truly makes student-athletes heroes in the eyes of those who look up to them.

Beginning in the Summer of 2001, the MIAA began to promote community service as a major initiative within the MIAA Student Services Program. This declaration came following the participation of students on the MIAA Student Advisory Committee at the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Annual Student Leadership Conference. The students participated in a community service project in which they helped the Indianapolis Parks Department to restore many recreation areas in need of improvement. The rewards that these

Student athletes have the ability to make an impact with their actions off the playing field.

***“The greatest joy one can have is doing something for someone else, without any thought of getting something in return.”
-John Wooden***

students experienced were exactly what the MIAA had hoped to promote among its membership to plan and promote the community service outreach in its member schools.

In the Fall of 2003, an opportunity arose for the community service initiative to take another large step forward with the participation of schools across the state in the **“Make the Point for Special Olympics”** service and fundraising event. Through this initiative, schools took part in a tangible way to promote good citizenship in their schools and communities as they worked to make a difference in the pursuit of acceptance and inclusion for all individuals. Participation in this event was yet another example of what the MIAA hopes will be a strong effort on the part of its member schools to commit to future community service projects.

The administrators in each of the MIAA member institutions are encouraged to take advantage of the incredibly strong power of influence that each of their coaches, captains, and student-athletes share to help build stronger communities by giving back and proving that helping

hands make a huge difference. As the efforts of the MIAA to promote community service continue to grow, so do the hopes and expectations that member school leaders and all high school coaches will take the initiative to start their own service projects within their communities to help build atmospheres of respect and camaraderie.

The MIAA has established the Ron Burton Community Service Award to be presented annually at the Statewide Sportsmanship Summit. In addition, the MIAA anticipates that all nominees for annual team sportsmanship awards demonstrate a strong community service involvement.



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For information and/or assistance, please contact the MIAA Student Services Department at 508-541-7997.