



2024 Award Recipients

WELLNESS

SPORTSMANSHIP

COACHES' EDUCATION

LEADERSHIP

COMMUNITY SERVICE





2024 MIAA Award Recipients

MIAA Student-Athlete of the Month Award

*Recognizing excellence in academics, athletics and student leadership
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MIAA Harry Agganis Student-Athlete of the Year Scholarship

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NFHS Spirit of Sport Award

*For exemplifying the ideals of the positive spirit of sport that represent the core mission of education-based athletics
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Thank you to Lifetouch for providing photography for the MIAA Awards Banquet.



MIAA Student-Athlete of the Month Award

Recognizing excellence in academics, athletics and student leadership



September 2023

Nick Gangemi, Medfield High School

Nick was nominated by his Varsity Football Coach, Eric Ormberg, who described Nick as “everything you want in a leader and student-athlete.” Coach Ormberg continued, “He took a chance playing football during the Covid Spring Season and in two years was elected captain.”

Nick has also been a captain in basketball and a league all-star in football. Recently, a new student moved into Medfield and was enrolling in the main office, Nick went out of his way to welcome the student and make him feel a part of Warrior Nation. It is through his natural ability to lead, that the respect from his peers and staff have come throughout his high school career.

As a student, Nick has earned a 3.97 GPA while taking all Advanced Placement and Honors -level classes. In addition to his stellar career as an athlete and a great academic record, Nick has served on several school clubs and committees: Project Teamwork Anti-bullying/ Anti-hazing Club, National Honor Society, Medfield Strategic Planning, and the Student Council. Nick also volunteers at the Mills Library Book Fair, the Junior Football Camp, and the Medfield Youth Baseball Program.



September 2023

Molly Driscoll, Watertown High School

Molly Driscoll is a three-sport athlete for the Red Raiders playing field hockey, ice hockey, and lacrosse. In field hockey, Molly has started and played in every game since her freshmen year and in ice hockey she has started in every game since her eighth grade year. Her statistics in field hockey are generational as she has scored well over 100 goals in her Covid-shortened career and at the mid-point of her senior season had recorded 9 hat tricks. This year, she and her teammates set the national record for most consecutive shutouts.

A strong member of her community, Molly volunteers with the youth field hockey program, assisted in the local food pantry and volunteers at her church. As Mr. Murphy stated, “Molly exemplifies everything we are looking for in a student-athlete.....she is dependable, motivated, thoughtful, and hard-working. Molly is never afraid to help her younger teammates and is a great leader.”

Molly has verbally committed to play field hockey at Boston University.



October 2023

Katelyn Farrell, Hanover High School

Katelyn is a three-sport athlete for the Hawks, playing soccer and participating in indoor and outdoor track. As a student, Katelyn excels with an overall GPA of 4.8 while taking 4 Advanced Placement classes and 2 Honors-level classes her senior year. She had the distinction of getting the highest GPA for all student-athletes at Hanover High School this Fall. Katelyn was the stopper on Hanover's Division 3 State Finalist team as she regularly marked the opposing team's primary scorer. She is a first time Patriot League All Star, and is also Hanover's Patriot League Scholar-Athlete recipient for the Fall of 2023.

Outside of the classroom, Katelyn is a tremendous leader in our school community. During Hanover's Spirit Week she was an integral component in planning and managing the rally. On Thanksgiving morning, Katelyn volunteered at Hanover's Turkey Trot 5K for the second consecutive year. Prior to the start of the school year, Katelyn was selected to lead incoming students on tours during Freshman Orientation.



October 2023

Matt McAuliffe, Pembroke High School

Matt is a stellar soccer player for the Titans. An honors student with a GPA of 3.82 since his freshmen year, Matt has been a three-year starter and four-year varsity team member for the boys soccer team and was a member of the State Finalist Team this past Fall. In his previous seasons, Matt has been an integral part of the undefeated regular season team in 2022 and has also been a repeat Patriot League All-Star. As a team captain, Matt was a leader both on and off the field at Pembroke High School and valued by his teammates and classmates for always doing things the right way. For example, Matt and his teammates are volunteers at the local food pantry, and he also donates many hours preparing food for the needs of the community.

In the words of his coach, "Matt who was a Patriot League All Star in 2021 is the engine for our team as our holding/defensive midfielder. He may be the strongest overall player I have ever coached and his physicality and strength in midfield makes him a tremendous player for us and an absolute challenge for our opponents to deal with. He is a terrific ball winner and a 4-year varsity player. Matt is also our best on and off-field leader. He is kind, considerate and extremely mature for his age. Additionally, Matt is a Honor Roll student at Pembroke HS and a standout member of Pembroke DECA."



November 2023

Joseph Keroack, Ludlow High School

His strong GPA, 4.4 on a 4.0 scale, and class rank of #1, are a testament to his hard work and dedication to his courses. Coach Gauvin reflected on Joseph as an athlete, “Joseph Keroack is among the most talented, dedicated, and hardworking athletes I've ever coached in my 25-year career. He's a true student of the sport, constantly seeking to understand its demands and how they'll benefit him in the long term.”

Joseph Keroack shattered a 12-year-old record by running a time of 15:42 and consistently ranks as one of the top two runners on the team. His contributions helped the Ludlow team clinch a league title.

Outside of school, Joseph is an active participant in the community. Joseph volunteers at the Ludlow Fire Department Open House, cleaning up the XC course, tending to the Baird Middle School Garden, participating in an XC meet to raise cancer awareness, joining in "Say 'Hello'" awareness week, and assisting at the Ludlow Athletics Hall of Fame ceremony.



November 2023

Juliana Pompeii, Leominster High School

Juliana has excelled in three sports, field hockey, basketball, and lacrosse where she has been named captain of all three.

As a student Juliana has consistently challenged herself with high level courses, taking all Honors and AP classes her entire high school career. She is currently ranked 17th in the senior class of 418 students and has a GPA of 3.93 (on a 4 point scale).

As Coach Brow explained, “Jules is a 3-sport athlete at Leominster High School and is the type of player that any coach would love to have on their team.” She goes above and beyond, putting 120% effort into everything she does. She has been a 3-year varsity field hockey player, 4-year varsity basketball player, and 4-year varsity lacrosse player. She is also a captain of all 3 teams (1x FH, 1x Lax, and 2x basketball). She is a multisport league all-star (multiple times), most recently named MidWach League All-Star for field hockey for the 2023 season.

Outside of the fields and classes, Juliana is involved in the sports community and incorporates that into community service as well. She is a volunteer basketball coach for St. Anna's School in Leominster and for the past 3 winters she spent Saturday mornings coaching 6–7-year-olds. She has also volunteered with Challenger baseball and basketball leagues, as a neurotypical buddy for the players with varying levels of disabilities.



December 2023

Coco Clapton, Swampscott High School

Coco is a stellar athlete for the Big Blue excelling in field hockey, swimming, and lacrosse. Her coach and nominator Courtney Russo shared Coco has been a 4-year starter for field hockey and lacrosse at Swampscott High School. She is captain of the field hockey, swimming and lacrosse teams, and has received the Coaches Award, Player Award, MVP, and Rookie of the Year in lacrosse. Rewarded for her success, the Salem News and Lynn Item named her an All-Star. She has committed to the University of Massachusetts-Lowell for lacrosse and is excited about this endeavor.

As Coach Russo said, "Coco is always the hardest worker on the field or in the pool. She pushes herself and inspires others to work harder around her, and each team that Coco is on is better because of her. She is coachable and always looking to improve and asking for input or suggestions. Coco is thoughtful and takes her role as captain very seriously. She makes sure that all the underclassmen are included and goes out of her way to make sure everyone is supported and feels connected to the team."



December 2023

Emma Redding, Mansfield High School

A three-sport athlete for the Hornets, Emma excels in field hockey and outdoor track and field while being a partner in Unified Bocce in the Winter. As a 4-year varsity field hockey player, she served as a captain during her Senior year and was also the recipient of the Leda Levine Award for Character and Leadership as a Junior. As a partner in Unified Bocce for two years, Emma participated in the inaugural season which generated excitement throughout the school. She is a four-year letter winner in Outdoor Spring Track and Field.

Academically, Emma has been a shining star at Mansfield High School garnering a 4.39 Weighted GPA. An active member of the community, Emma has been a leader in the Best Buddies Program for 4 years, serving for three years on the Executive Board and 2 years as Vice President. A member of World Travel Club, Emma travelled to Spain with students and staff in the Summer of 2023. A Co-Founder of Mansfield's Northeast Science Bowl Team during her Junior Year, Emma is also a member of Mansfield's Leadership Academy. Emma also organized a Special Olympics Event at MHS in the Spring of 2023 and has volunteered as a Mansfield Youth Field Hockey Coach. Emma has also participated in the Jimmy Fund Walk and Best Buddies Friendship Walk.



January 2024

Brook Anacleto, Notre Dame Academy (Worcester)

Brooke is a student at Notre Dame Academy in Worcester and excels in cross country, indoor and outdoor track and field. Nominated by her cross country and track coach Victoria Steffon, Brooke has had a stellar career for the Rebels as she has captained all three programs for three years.

A mentor and leader for the younger athletes, Brooke “works hard every day and consistently exhibits admirable behavior.” Her success in the classroom (never receiving any grade lower than an A) and beyond is cause for celebration. Brooke not only has impressive accomplishments at NDA but has also taken her talents and applied them beyond as a Dual Enrollment student at Assumption College and Anna Maria College. In addition to this, Brooke has been a captain of the Math Team, conducted research at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, served on the Student-Athlete Advisory Council, been a Social and Emotional Student Mentor, and a student tutor. In her rare spare time, Brooke assists in the Unified Sports Program, volunteers at the library, and assists with resident care and activities at the Jewish Healthcare Center.



January 2024

Vasili Tsiotos, Winthrop High School

A three-sport athlete and stellar student, Vasili plays football, basketball, and competes in outdoor track and field. Nominated by his track coach, Warren MacPhail, Vasili has been a track captain for three seasons, an NEC Football All-Star for the 2023 season, and a Boston Globe and Boston Herald All-Star. A letterwinner as a member of the track team in the shot put, discus, and 400 meters, Vasili is the anchor of the Vikings football team as the center. MacPhail describes Vasili as a “hard worker with a great personality and has tremendous intelligence and self-discipline.” MacPhail continued that he cannot recall anyone, coach or teammate, saying a negative word about Vasili.

As a student, Vasili is a member of the National Honor Society and was chosen as the class commencement speaker at his Greek School graduation. Vasili consistently takes a rigorous course schedule and is currently enrolled in 5 Advanced Placement classes. He was also the Innovation Award Winner at the Model UN Camp.

In addition to his success in the classroom and on the athletic fields, Vasili is an active member of his community as an altar boy group leader and volunteer at Saint George Church, volunteer server at the Thanksgiving Dinner at Brothers Deli in Lynn, and a volunteer with Winthrop Youth Flag Football.



February 2024

Emily Goodhue, Reading Memorial High School

Emily is a standout student-athlete at Reading Memorial High School and was nominated by Athletic Director Thomas Zaya. Described as a “ray of sunshine” at Reading Memorial High School, Emily has had a stellar career playing volleyball, basketball, and softball. She is currently serving as the Softball Captain in the 2024 season. A true team player, Emily plays the game with great integrity, values hard work, and sportsmanship. She is also a great example and leader for the younger athletes in Reading and serves as a great peer leader.

A member of the National Honor Society and the Best Buddies Program at RMHS, Emily serves as a “Rocket Ambassador”, reads the morning announcements at RMHS, is a Student Council Representative, and is a member of the Spanish Club, and American Sign Language Club. She genuinely participates in many programs to make Reading Memorial High School a great place.

Mr. Zaya commented that Emily “puts others ahead of herself, tutors’ other students, and leads by example.” One of the first students to arrive each day at RMHS and the last to leave, Mr. Zaya said that he has not met many students like Emily in his thirty plus years in public education.



February 2024

Logan Walsh, Ludlow High School

Logan has excelled as a runner during his entire career as a Lion. He finished in fourth place in the Western Mass Cross Country meet and 15th in the Massachusetts State Meet. His Indoor Track season was filled with personal and team achievements as Logan won the mile and 1,000-meter event in Western Massachusetts. He also qualified for the Nationals in the mile. All these accomplishments earned him accolades including all Western Mass 1st Team honors and recipient of the Impact Runner Award at Ludlow High School. As a team, Logan was instrumental in his team’s third place overall finish in the Western Mass meet. Coach Gauvin described Logan as a vital part of the team’s success due to his leadership and commitment to team and individual goals. She continued by stating Logan’s “positive impact on younger athletes and strong character” are a great example for their successful program.

As a student, Logan is a member of the National Honor Society and consistently takes a rigorous courseload with three AP courses and an honors class in addition to Spanish 4. His teachers commented that his intellectual curiosity and strong work ethic are a great combination, and are the reasons behind his academic success. Graduating as a top student in the Ludlow High Class of 2024, Logan is a positive contributor to his community. He has volunteered at numerous events throughout Ludlow, including the Baird Middle School Garden cleanup, the youth track program at the Ludlow Boys and Girls Club, and participated in a cross country meet that focused on raising cancer awareness. “He is selfless and a leader that inspires others,” wrote Gauvin.



March 2024

Elisabeth (Lizzie) Gardiner, Saint Bernard's High School

Lizzie has excelled as a student earning a GPA of 3.87 and ranked third in her class. Lizzie received the Smith College Book Award and the "Out of the Ordinary" Award from Alfred University, as well as the Outstanding Student Award from St. Bernard's in the areas of English, Science and History.

As an athlete, Lizzie has competed in soccer, basketball, and lacrosse for all four years; captain in all three sports. She has also been the Team MVP in soccer and basketball as well as the Worcester Telegram Hometown Player of the Week twice in Basketball. As Athletic Director and nominator Ray Cosenza commented, "...she has been the model of consistency, kindness, work ethic, leadership, academic excellence, and athletic achievement. In my thirty-eight plus years in the field of education, I have known very few who check all the boxes as well as Lizzie has."

Lizzie has also been very active serving her community as she volunteers at Habitat for Humanity, tutors students at STB, is a Student Ambassador for the MIAA, and is a volunteer in the Admissions Office at STB. As a Class President and National Honor Society Officer, Lizzie has been a true leader for the Bernardians. According to her teacher and senior class advisor Brendan Kelley, Lizzie has shown great spirit for her school and utilized her creative side to assist the school.



March 2024

Jackson Bailey, North Middlesex Regional High School

Jackson is a three-sport athlete, competing in cross country, indoor track and field, and baseball. He was a captain in all three sports, and received the Coaches Award and Team MVP in cross country as well as being named a league all-star in indoor track and field.

As a student, Jackson has maintained a very high GPA while taking a very demanding caseload. He is a member of the National Honor Society and the Rho Kappa National Honor Society for Social Studies. As impressive as Jackson is as a student-athlete, he is also involved in his community raising money for local charities and proposing and advocating for a new course at NMRHS so students have a better understanding of financial literacy.

Most impressive is Jackson's involvement in NOLA, (New Orleans Louisiana Service Learning). The NOLA Program consists of 38 students whose ages range from sophomores to seniors. As a student coordinator he was responsible for the planning of the trip which included fundraisers, service, flights, and accommodations. The service trip takes place over April vacation and students stay at Camp Restore and take part in activities to assist those less fortunate. Some of those activities included building a concrete wheelchair accessible ramp, cleaning kitchens, common areas, bathrooms, supply closets, and outdoor areas in the New Orleans area.



April 2024

Ryan Bedigian, Northbridge High School

Ryan is not just a talented athlete, but an exceptional student and a pillar of his community. Nominated by Coach Keith Verra, Ryan boasts an impressive academic record with a GPA of 4.55. His achievements extend beyond the classroom. He is a National Honor Society member, recognized for his mathematical prowess with the Math Medal Award, and earning Member of the Month honors in October. Ryan's dedication goes further with his involvement in DECA and the World Language Honor Society.

Ryan's talents shine on the field as well. A versatile athlete, he has participated in baseball, golf, indoor track and field, and the ski club. His dedication to his team is evident – he was named Baseball Teammate of the Year as a junior and continues to excel for the Rams this season.

Ryan's commitment extends beyond school. He volunteers in Northbridge youth sports programs and actively participates in his church. He mentors ninth graders at NHS and even tested water safety in his town. A true leader, he inspires both his peers and the wider community. Coach Verra says, "Ryan is the hardest working player on the baseball team. His selfless and team-first attitude has earned him the respect of his teammates. I can't think of a more deserving person to be named Student-Athlete of the Month."



April 2024

Ava Askren, Clinton High School

Nominated by softball coach, Angela Kaizer, Ava excels as both a student and an athlete. She captains the cross country, indoor track and field, and softball teams. As a runner, she holds the CHS record in the mile. Ava's dedication is evident in her leadership. During her senior cross-country season, she wasn't the only girl interested, but the only one to commit. She then rallied classmates to join, forming a team that eventually competed at the State meet.

On the softball field, Ava's talents shine. Recently nominated as the Worcester Telegram and Gazette Player of the Week, her passion for the sport extends beyond her own game. Ava coaches several youth teams. The young players admire her, aspiring to be "just like Coach Ava." Ava's achievements extend far beyond athletics. As valedictorian, she boasts a stellar GPA of 4.428 and membership in the National Honor Society. Her academic accolades include the Advanced Placement Scholar Award, John and Abigail Adams scholarship, Superintendent's Award, and recognition on the Academic All-State teams for both cross country and indoor track. She won the Harvard Book Award and achieved the highest average in AP Language, Criminal Justice, Health and Wellness, and the challenging AP Calculus BC.

Ava's dedication extends beyond the classroom and athletic fields. She has played a role in planning a senior citizen dance for Clinton and organized a drive to collect youth softball and baseball equipment for the town's students. Additionally, Ava has been instrumental in WHEAT community connections, a local organization dedicated to serving Clinton residents. Her contributions helped WHEAT gain recognition as a direct service program of the United Way of Tri-County.



May 2024

Abigail Bettencourt, Peabody Veterans Memorial High School

A captain of all three sports, Abigail also received honors in these sports. In volleyball, she was the Co-MVP, Salem News All-Star, MACVCA All State Team, Lynn Item All-Star, and the NEC Player of the Year as a Senior. As a basketball player, Abigail also received the Rookie of the Year Award as a freshman, Salem News All -Star all four years, and an NEC All-star every year. Her accolades did not end in the Spring as a softball player, Abigail also received the Boston Globe Athlete of the Year, co-MVP for the Tanners, and the NEC Player of the Year for three consecutive years.

Her accomplishments in the classroom were just as impressive as her success on the playing field. She is a member of the National Honor Society, received the Harvard Book Award, was named an AP Scholar, served on the Executive Board of DECA, and participated on the Math Team. Her class rank is 3 out of 292.

Finally, Abigail serves her community in many areas as a youth volunteer basketball, volleyball, and softball coach. She is also active in Unified Sports and Best Buddies and raised over \$1,000 for cancer research through her participation in A Shot for Life. Abigail also serves on the Mayor's Council in Peabody and attended the Annual NEC Leadership Conference.



May 2024

Tanya Medina, Springfield Central High School

A standout softball player for the Golden Eagles, Tanya is a dedicated and hard working player. She started in left field and had the 2nd highest batting average on the team (.417), led the team in hits (30) and singles (29). She was also second on the team in runs scored (33) and led the team in Reached on Error (ROE) with 5. Coach Percy-Golas said, "Tanya is a coach's dream player as she works hard and never complains. She won't be All-League, but without her we would struggle."

Tanya is a great student at Central and this year took 5 Advanced Placement classes while playing a varsity sport. Her AP courseload included Pre-Calculus, Studio Art, English 12, Economics and African-American Studies. Her strong GPA has earned her a very high-class rank in a class of 513 students.

In addition to her in-school activities, Tanya finds the time to be a contributing member of her community. She is actively involved in volunteer work through her church's Serve Day, an annual initiative designed to make a difference beyond the church walls and serve the local community to uplift those in need. Last summer, Tanya joined a group of volunteers that went to Christina's House, a local non-profit, where they engaged in cooking and cleaning activities. This service provided much need assistance to the residents and staff to create a more welcoming and comforting environment. Tanya has also participated in Back-to-School events in Holyoke to help fill backpacks and ensure a smooth start to the school year for elementary school children. A supporter of our veterans, Tanya has also been to the Ludlow Veterans' Center to provide blankets to those in need and made care packages for the homeless in Western Mass.



Harry Agganis Student-Athlete of the Year Scholarship

Recognizing excellence in character, leadership and community service



Abigail Bettencourt
Peabody Veterans Memorial High School



Vasili Tsiotos
Winthrop High School

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) and the Harry Agganis Family Foundation are thrilled to announce Abigail Bettencourt of Peabody Veterans Memorial High School and Vasili Tsiotos of Winthrop High School as the 2024 Harry Agganis Student-Athlete of the Year recipients. This prestigious award recognizes exceptional student-athletes who excel in academics, athletics, and community service. Both Abigail and Vasili exemplify the values embodied by the Agganis Family Foundation and serve as outstanding role models for their peers.

Abigail Bettencourt, Peabody Veterans Memorial High School

A standout athlete in volleyball, basketball, and softball, Abigail captained all three teams and earned numerous honors. Her academic achievements are equally impressive, including membership in the National Honor Society and the Harvard Book Award. Beyond the classroom and the playing field, Abigail is dedicated to community service, volunteering as a youth coach and participating in various philanthropic endeavors. She will attend Brown University in the fall to continue her softball career.

Vasili Tsiotos, Winthrop High School

A versatile athlete competing in football, basketball, and track and field, Vasili has excelled in all three sports. His leadership qualities are evident in his role as track captain and football center. An accomplished student, Vasili is a member of the National Honor Society and has demonstrated a strong commitment to community service. He will attend the University of Massachusetts-Amherst in the fall.

The MIAA extends its heartfelt congratulations to Abigail Bettencourt and Vasili Tsiotos on this remarkable achievement. Their dedication to their sports, academics, and community is an inspiration to all.

NFHS Spirit of Sport Award Massachusetts Recipient



Bella and Olivia Medeiros Methuen High School

For exemplifying the ideals of the positive spirit of sport that represent the core mission of education-based athletics

Bella and Olivia Medeiros are twin sisters that attend Methuen High School. Bella is a three-sport athlete on the soccer, basketball and softball teams. Olivia is a member of the Unified Basketball team and team manager for the girls varsity basketball team that Bella participates on. The special bond between these sisters has made a lasting impact on the Methuen community.

Olivia was born with hypoplasia of the corpus callosum, a condition where the nerves connecting the left and right sides of her brain are thinner than usual and impact communication between the two hemispheres. Although doctors initially believed she would never walk or talk, Olivia has shattered those expectations. She faces developmental challenges and requires assistance with some daily tasks, and through a 1-on-1 assistant at Methuen High School is thriving as a high school student. Olivia loves to watch her sister Bella play basketball and the team shares a special camaraderie from their relationship.

Olivia can always be counted upon to share encouragement and a big smile with Bella. Teammate Samantha Pfeil recognizes the bond between the sisters, as well as the impact that their relationship has on the entire team. "Bella is one of the most selfless people I know," she said. "She's

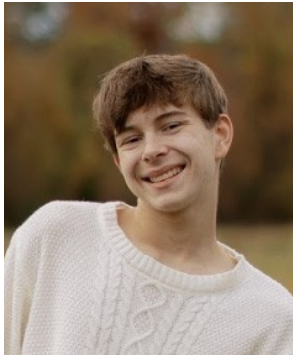
all about other people, always pulling each other up." Samantha added, "We know we're not just playing for ourselves; we're playing for our families and for Olivia."

Throughout their school years, Bella has looked out for Olivia. She describes their relationship as "...like a twin connection, where I've kind of understood her more than a lot of people." Bella added "When I was with other people and she would say something, and they wouldn't know what she said, then I would get it right away as if it was a normal conversation."

Olivia joined the Methuen High School Unified Basketball team in the fall of 2023, her first time playing with physically stronger peers. Her excitement for games is evident to teachers and coaches through the verbal cues and other joyful signs that she shares throughout the school day. The excitement and positivity expressed by Olivia is contagious and shared amongst teammates on the Unified Basketball and girls basketball teams. Bella says, "I love being able to see her get the ball...She doesn't really dribble. She just kind of bounces it off of her leg, and she's got a big smile on her face that would light up literally any room."

Congratulations to Bella and Olivia Medeiros for being selected as the Massachusetts recipient of the NFHS Spirit of Sport Award.

NFHS Heart of the Arts Award Massachusetts Recipient



Troy Blanchette

Millis High School

For exemplifying the ideals of the positive heart of the arts that represent the core mission of education-based activities

Troy Blanchette is a senior at Millis High School. Throughout his high school career, Troy's leadership has been on display within academics and school activities. Troy serves as the President for the Drama Club and Amnesty International as well as the Vice President of the National Honor Society. He is involved with the Active Minds chapter at Millis High School and is a STEAM Scholar, experiencing a personalized education in the pursuit of higher education goals in the disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. Troy's academic achievements include awards for the highest average in Honors Pre-Calculus, Honors Physics and Biology, as well as a capstone project exploring and testing bacteria in a school building.

In addition to his academic success, Troy has a love for the performing arts. He has been a member of the drama club, concert and pep bands and Terpsichore, the school dance group, for a majority of his high school years. Troy began his school performance career in the Middle School Drama Club and now acts as the co-director of the program. He has performed solo pieces for the dance club and is the lead saxophone player in the band.

Millis High School teacher and Drama Club advisor Victoria Bartley says, "What really speaks of his 'Heart of the Arts' is his work in the High School Drama Club which I direct. Presently, we have a large number of freshmen students

who were not serious about the commitment. Troy was the one who addressed them to foster a culture of diligence and enthusiasm which made an impact on the drama program. Furthermore, he is always the first to memorize his lines and executes them to perfection."

Traditionally, Millis High School conducts a fall performance each year. Through Troy's leadership, he worked with other students to add a second performance within the academic year. Troy expressed an interest in being a part of the Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild (METG) Festival, a competitive program that includes 112 one-act plays produced by member high schools. Troy took the initiative to request school approval to enter the festival and directed the play. He led all of the essential duties in selecting the play, holding auditions, selecting roles, helping design the set and holding rehearsals three times a week. He also attended Saturday meetings about METG. This major undertaking for a high school student was guided by his love of drama and sharing it with the school community.

Congratulations to Troy Blanchette for being selected as the Massachusetts recipient of the NFHS Heart of the Arts Award.



MIAA Coach of the Year Award

Recognizing excellence in character, service, leadership and coaching



Alpine Ski - Girls

Jane O'Riordan, Hampshire Regional Middle/High School

- Alpine Ski coach for 17 years
- Multiple League Championships
- Organizes Western Massachusetts Championship Meet each year

Philosophy: Coach O'Riordan exemplifies educational athletics. Jane works with all levels of ability and supports all her student-athletes equally. Coach Jane O'Riordan's no-cut policy has allowed maximum participation for Hampshire Regional over her time as the head coach to both Boys & Girls programs.



Baseball

Joe DeMelo, Seekonk High School

- 2023-24 Record: 22-3
- Career Record: 156-101
- Baseball Coach for 13 years
- MIAA Division 4 State Champions 2023, 2024
- MIAA Division 4 State Finalists 2022
- MIAA South Sectional Finalists 2018
- South Coast Conference Champions 2017-19, 2022-24

Philosophy: I don't consider myself just a baseball coach I consider what I do, a teacher of life lessons, help young men become great members of our community. Help them understand what it takes not only to be a great baseball player but a better individual.



Basketball - Boys

CJ Neely, Franklin High School

- 2023-24 Record: 25-2
- Career Record: 187-47
- MIAA Division 1 State Finalists 2017, 2018, 2024
- MIAA Division 1 Central Sectional Champions 2017, 2018
- Boston Globe Division 1 Coach of the Year 2017, 2024
- Massachusetts Basketball Coaches Association Coach of the Year 2017, 2023
- Former High School Cross Country, Tennis and Track and Field Coach

Philosophy: The high school basketball coach must take on many roles and has many responsibilities. My motto as a coach is to "teach the person before the player". A head coach is in a very important position as an educator of character and life skills. The true success of a coach is not in the wins and losses but in what kind of people graduate from your program and who they are 5-10 years after they have left you. Coaches should stress values before winning and never compromise themselves just to get a few more "w's". Winning is an unbelievable thing, but it is a byproduct of improving your players as people and providing them with the skills to be successful in life. There are three key elements that direct my coaching:

1. Positive Relationship Building
2. Character Development through team's Core Values
3. Student Athlete Development on and off the court and in the classroom



Basketball - Girls

Diana Newcomb, Rockland High School

- 2023-24 Record: 9-13
- Career Record: 194-70
- South Shore League Champions 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2022
- MIAA Division 3 South Sectional Champions 2020
- MIAA Division 3 State Finalists 2022
- MIAA Division 3 Final Four 2023
- Boston Globe Coach of the Year 2020
- MBCA Coach of the Year 2020, 2022
- District Department Head for Physical Education, Health and Wellness, Family Consumer Science and Business

Philosophy: My goal as an educator and a coach in a small public school is to lead by example. I want to help the students/student athletes of Rockland and surrounding towns realize that being part of a team is more about learning how to grow, work together, take responsibility and learn time management more than it is about "wins and losses". If you put in an honest days work despite the result you will set yourself up for success in life. You learn more from a loss than you do from a win. Care about the product you prepped for and put out on gameday. Don't mistake kindness for weakness. Show up for yourself and for others. Sometimes you have to put your head down and do the dirty work. High School is like a long game of basketball, each year is a new quarter-reset and prepare and know that you have put in the work to finish strong. Have pride in the little and big things in life.



Cross Country - Boys

Jeff Bartlett, Danvers High School

- 2023-24 Record: 6-1
- Career Record: 19-10
- MIAA Division 2 State Champions 2023
- MIAA Division 2 State Second Place 2022
- Multiple time Salem News Coach of the Year
- Boston Globe Division 2 Coach of the Year
- New England Student Leadership Conference Facilitator 2012-19
- Danvers Middle School Health Teacher

Philosophy: My goal as a coach is to create an environment where every student-athlete can be successful and achieve more than they thought possible while helping them grow in spirit, mind, and body.



Field Hockey

Eileen Donahue, Watertown High School

- 2023-24 Record: 22-0
- Career Record: 771-34-46
- NFHS Records 184 Game Undefeated Streak and 124 Consecutive Wins
- MIAA State Championships - 21 times
- MIAA Division 2 North Champions - 26 times
- Middlesex League Champions - 34 times
- Massachusetts Women in Athletics Distinguished Service Award 2020
- Pathfinder Award for commitment to girls and women in sports 2012
- Coach of the Year Honors: NFHCA 2000, 2013, Top of the Circle United States 2014
- Hall of Fame Honors: New Agenda Northeast 1995, Watertown High School 1997, Belmont High School 2001, National Field Hockey Coaches Association 2020
- K-5 Physical Education Teacher

Philosophy: I believe it's not how you start, it's how you finish. Whatever athletic level each player is at, I do my best to teach them that they can always do better. I build on each player contributing at a high level on the team. All my teams create their own identity. We don't get caught up into individual stats. It's the team accomplishments that are important. Every practice my players consistently compete with each other. I encourage them to embrace the uncomfortable. Over time, when a player accepts the process, and buys into the training, that's where I see their development and confidence shine. This all helps with the success of our team.



Football

Brian Alyward, Tewksbury Memorial High School

- 2023-24 Record: 8-4
- Career Record: 188-110-1
- MIAA Division 3 State Champions 2013
- MIAA State Finalists 2011, 2018
- MIAA Sectional Champions 2011-2014, 2017-2019
- Merrimack Valley Conference Champions - 9 times
- Boston Globe Division 3 Coach of the Year 2013
- New England Patriots Coach of the Week - October 2013
- Tewksbury Town Crier Coach of the Decade 2019
- Merrimack Valley Conference Coach of the Year - Multiple times
- One of extremely small group of father/son coaches to earn 300 combined wins
- Unified Basketball Coach and Best Buddies Coordinator

Philosophy: Brian Alyward represents all the fine qualities for which we stand for at Tewksbury Memorial High School. He is an outstanding leader in the classroom and on the field. He is humble and effective in conveying lessons and installing a game plan. Brian has done a fantastic job extending his classroom to the field and is a true teacher that also excels as a Coach!



Golf - Fall

Sean Noonan, St. John's High School

- 2023-24 Record: 16-1
- Career Record: 142-35-1
- Golf Coach for 10 Years
- MIAA Division 1 State Champions 2023, 2024
- Boston Globe Coach of the Year 2024

Philosophy: My coaching philosophy is to build a TEAM first approach with my players as golf is such a individual sport and in doing this I strive to put each player in the best position to succeed – not only on the golf course but in their future lives. We have acquired a Team mantra over the past few years from a quote from the great Michael Jordan “Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others MAKE it happen” and I think we have done this winning back to back State Championships.



Gymnastics - Girls

Breanna Vacca, Medway High School

- 2023-24 Record: 7-1
- Tri Valley League Coach of the Year 2023
- MAHSGC Coach of the Year Finalist 2016, 2017, 2018, 2023
- All Around State Qualifiers 2015-19, 2022-24
- Uneven Bars State Qualifiers 2015, 2024
- Vault State Qualifiers 2015-18, 2022-24
- Balance Beam State Qualifiers 2017-19, 2023-24
- Floor Exercise State Qualifiers 2017-19, 2022-24
- New England Qualifiers - 2017 Vault
- MAHSGC and USAG Professional Member

Philosophy: As a high school gymnastics coach, my philosophy centers on creating a positive and inclusive environment where athletes can develop both their gymnastics skills and their character. I believe in prioritizing individual growth alongside teamwork, encouraging each gymnast to set personal goals while supporting one another in a shared pursuit of excellence. Emphasizing the importance of the student aspect of student-athlete. I aim to inspire them not only to be proficient gymnasts but also confident young adults. I value open communication, celebrating achievements both big and small and viewing challenges as opportunities for learning. My ultimate goal is to inspire a lifelong love for the sport and leave my athletes with the tools they need to succeed both in and out of the gymnastics gym.



Ice Hockey - Boys

Gino Khachadourian, Winchester High School

- 2023-24 Record: 16-10-1
- Career Record: 48-36-10
- MIAA Division 1 State Finalists 2024
- Boston Globe Coach of the Year 2024
- MSHCA Coach of the Year (Peter Doherty Award) 2024
- MSHCA Member
- Winchester Youth Hockey Coach

Philosophy: Everyone wants to win...but I believe that developing players from the beginning of the season to the end is just as important. I also strongly believe in teaching the boys to respect the game, respect the officials and be good students in school and good citizens in the community.



Ice Hockey - Girls

Tina Beauchemin, Algonquin Regional High School

- 2023-24 Record: 16-7-1
- Career Record: 101-37-13
- MIAA Division 2 State Champions 2022
- MIAA Division 2 Final Four 2024
- Assistant Ice Hockey Coach for 5 years

Philosophy: Hockey has been a huge part of my life and has given me joy and purpose; my hope is I am sharing that devotion and passion of the game onto our athletes. I became a coach to give back to the sport that has given me so much. Mentoring these young girls and watching them grow and mature on the ice and off is both rewarding and fulfilling.



Lacrosse - Boys

John Isaf, Medfield High School

- 2023-24 Record: 20-3
- Career Record: 219-50
- Tri Valley League Champions 2012-2019, 2021-2024
- MIAA Division 2 State Finalists 2013, 2019
- MIAA Division 2 State Champions 2014-2016
- MIAA Division 2 Central/East Sectional Champions 2017, Finalists 2021
- MIAA Division 3 State Finalists 2022, Final Four 2023
- MIAA Division 3 State Champions 2024
- Boston Globe Division 2 Coach of the Year 2016
- Tri Valley League Large Coach of the Year 2022
- US Lacrosse Coach of the Year Eastern Mass 2022

Philosophy: It's all about culture. Create a culture that everyone wants to be a part of, and the rest will take care of itself. In my view, culture is nothing more than: "This how we do things here. This is what's expected of you here." We focus on the process of getting better each week and reaching our highest compete level so we're playing our best ball when the tourney comes around in June. We're about achieving standards, not outcomes. All know they must hold themselves and their teammates accountable to those standards and our championship tradition...and always put what's best for our team and program first. On the field and off. That's our culture.



Nordic Ski - Girls

Hilary Greene, Mount Greylock Regional School

- Nordic Ski Coach for 25 Years
- MIAA Girls Nordic Ski State Champions 2008-09, 2010-12, 2016-19, 2024
- MIAA Girls Nordic Ski State Finalists 2020
- MIAA Boys Nordic Ski State Champions 2000-02, 2006-09, 2011-17, '20, '22, '23
- MIAA Boys Nordic Ski State Finalists 2020
- Former Cross Country and Track and Field Coach

Philosophy: Hilary's philosophy is built on three core principles:

1. *A Love for the Sport - Encouraging athletes to embrace the joy of the sport through fun, adventure, and a connection with nature, which fosters a lifelong passion for skiing and outdoor activities.*
2. *Team Culture and Excellence – Cultivating a positive, supportive team environment where athletes are inspired to perform at their best, not only for their own growth but for the success of their teammates.*
3. *Character Development – Instilling values such as confidence, dedication, hard work, and kindness, which shape athletes into strong, respectful individuals and contribute to the creation of successful, high-achieving teams.*

Through this approach, Hilary aims to develop not only skilled athletes but well-rounded, compassionate members of the community who excel both on and off the course.



Rugby - Boys

Andrew McLean, Hanover High School

- 2023-24 Record: 7-2
- Career Record: 35-14-1
- MIAA Division 2 State Champions 2017
- MIAA Division 2 State Finalists 2018, 2022, 2024
- Boys Cross Country Coach
- Advanced Placement Science Teacher

Philosophy: We aim to develop our student athletes as rugby players and people. The main reason to play any sport is to enjoy it but we recognize that as you get older this becomes a more complicated equation between enjoyment in the moment and the level of success an individual might be experiencing. That being said, we try to make every training session both enjoyable and purposeful and we always prioritize quality over quantity. During their time with our program we foster empowerment of our players to make decisions, accountability to own those decisions as well as resilience and teamwork as we strive to achieve our collective goals as individuals and as a team. We care for our players during their time with the program and after and we always welcome back alumni as coaches and role models.



Rugby - Girls

Matt Amonte, Weymouth High School

- 2023-24 Record: 5-2
- Career Record: 10-6
- MIAA State Finalists 2024
- Seeded Third in MIAA Girls Rugby State Tournament
- Girls Rugby Coach for 3 Years

Philosophy: Matt wants all students to be involved in a sport. He wants the student athletes to feel like they belong to a program and have pride in the program. Matt understands the importance of sportsmanship and playing the game with respect for opponents and officials. Matt has completely changed the culture around our girls program.



Soccer - Boys

Phil Fousek, Cambridge Rindge & Latin School

- 2023-24 Record: 8-8-1
- Career Record: 83-101-48
- Head Soccer Coach for 13 Years
- Dual County League Tournament Champions 2020
- Qualified for MIAA Soccer Tournament - 7 years
- Cambridge Public Schools Elementary and Middle School Teacher - 20 Years
- US Youth Soccer National League New England Conference Champion(U15), 2024
- SFC New England Youth Development Director

Philosophy: As the head coach of the Cambridge Rindge and Latin Boys' Soccer program, I have focused on establishing the following principles in my years in charge of the program. The first is helping to develop student-athletes who represent their families, the soccer program, school community, and the Cambridge community in a positive way. Team sports is a great platform to help young people learn about teamwork, resiliency, sportsmanship, accountability, and working toward a common goal. Along with developing a positive and supportive program myself and the coaching staff have emphasized the importance of achieving a high level of success on the soccer field. Student-athletes who are part of the CRLS Boys' Soccer program are expected to give maximum effort and are able to have a growth mindset in order to perform at their best.



Softball

Rachael Sprague, Walpole High School

- 2023-24 Record: 22-1
- Career Record: 149-58
- Bay State Conference Champions 2017, 2018, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
- MIAA Division 2 State Champions 2024
- Bay State Conference Coach of the Year 2023
- Boston Globe Division 2 Coach of the Year 2024
- Softball Coach for 14 Years
- Math Teacher for 15 Years
- Helped design new field project at Bird Middle School

Philosophy: Rachel has the right balance of student and athletes. She wants to win no doubt but not at the expense of life lessons, which includes team and school rules. She is stern but fair with her players holding them accountable when the situation calls for it.



Swimming & Diving - Boys

Dave Arinella, East Boston High School

- Career Record: 295-335-2
- Swimming and Diving Coach for 48 Years
- Boston City League Champions 2007
- Boston City League Coach of the Year 2007, 2024
- East Boston Athletic Board Coach of the Year 2007
- MIAA Swimming and Diving Team Sportsmanship Award 2010, 2015
- Boston Globe Division 2 Coach of the Year 2024
- EMISCA Swim Coaches Hall of Fame 2024
- Longest serving coach in any sport in East Boston High School history
- Longest serving coach in any sport in Boston Public Schools history

Philosophy: As a head coach you have to foster a philosophy of integrity and respect. If along the way you have won championships, that is fine. If you haven't that is fine as well. If you are doing your job then the least talented athlete on your team will feel that he or she is a valuable member of the team. Finally, I have always maintained that humility is a much more desirable trait than egotism.



Swimming & Diving - Girls

Jessica Pridham, Franklin High School

- Career Record: 65-8
- Hockomock League Champions (Girls) - 2016, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
- Hockomock League Champions (Boys) - 2018, 2019, 2020
- MIAA South Sectional Champions 2023
- Cara Buckwell Coach of the Year 2023
- Richard Whitworth Courage Award 2024

Philosophy: Swimming is not unlike other athletics, presenting a variety of challenges to it's participants; very similar to the multitude of challenges one faces in LIFE. There are times when the situations that life throws at us can be very difficult or even unimaginable. Acknowledging and celebrating each accomplishment no matter how great or small is valuable to any team dynamic because not everyone functions within the same skill set. Providing an environment that nurtures positive self esteem and confidence of the individual also creates a stable, positive, and caring team dynamic as well. Swimmers who feel that they are valued as an individual AND as a swimmer actively choose to positively impact their team in whatever way they are capable. The positive effort and positive energy one puts into actively coaching a team (even if you are coaching from a wheelchair) impacts the team as a whole. ALL participants should feel that their efforts are acknowledged, appreciated, as well as praised for their INDIVIDUAL achievements as well all contributions to the team. Every single swimmer within a team dynamic has an impact; regardless of ability or level of performance. These athletes learn so much from us as coaches and not just the fundamentals of our sport. Teach. Encourage. Show them, it can be done. Even if it looks like the situation is dire, there is always another way to "just keep swimming".



Tennis - Boys

Leonard O'Neil, Westborough High School

- 2023-24 Record: 19-2
- Career Record: 111-24
- MIAA Division 2 State Champions 2024
- MIAA Division 2 State Finalists 2022, 2023
- MIAA Division 2 Final Four 2022, 2023, 2024
- MIAA Division 1 State Finalists 2017, 2021
- MIAA Division 1 Central Sectional Champions 2017, 2021
- Teacher and Girls Varsity Soccer Coach at Blackstone Valley Reg. Voc/Tech High School

Philosophy: After 25 years of being in a classroom and over 25 seasons as a coach what is important to me and what I stress in both settings are not grades or wins but what type of person they become and relationships they form. It's never been about the wins and losses. I've always tried to help the young men and women I coach to be better. To teach them how to work hard, prepare and put themselves in the best position to succeed. In addition, I expect them to be honest with me, themselves and their effort, to not give up when presented with obstacles and be humble with their success. Most importantly I want to teach them how to pick themselves up and handle setbacks and defeat. I've never put winning or the sports I coach above all else. Their family will love them, their friends will be their friends and I will still be proud no matter their success or failure, just be a nice person. I talk to my players about putting family first, school second and their respective sport a distant third.

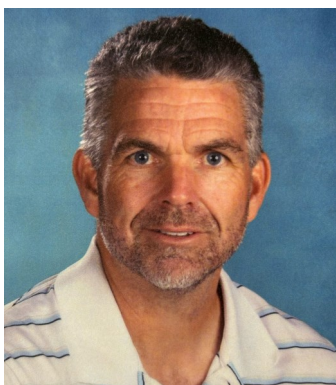


Tennis - Girls

Jessica Walls, Pembroke High School

- 2023-24 Record: 20-2
- Career Record: 118-103
- MIAA Division 3 State Champions 2024
- 2024 Patriot League Fisher Division Champions
- Tennis Coach for 14 Years
- Student Council and Policy Debate Co-Advisor

Philosophy: My interscholastic coaching philosophy is based on the ideals that are delineated in the Pembroke High School Athletics Handbook. "Participation in athletics is a privilege that carries with it a responsibility to teammates, the school, and the community. The program provides experiences to help students acquire confidence, self-esteem, and self-discipline." When students are participating in a sport in a Pembroke High School uniform, they are leaders who will be judged by their attitudes and their behavior both in the classroom and on their respective playing surfaces." Lastly, I strive every day to embody the following ideals, and to encourage my athletes to do the same. Rules of Good Sportsmanship: Student-athletes on a Pembroke High School athletic team are expected to show good sportsmanship at all times. In order to practice good sportsmanship, students must adhere to the following guidelines: Be respectful and humble in winning; Be gracious in losing; Be fair at all times; Follow the rules of the game; Accept respectfully all the decisions of game officials; Respect your opponent at all times; Conduct yourself at all times with honor and dignity; Recognize the efforts of your teammates and opponents in a positive way.



Track & Field, Indoor - Girls

Brian Walsh, Ludlow High School

- 2023-24 Record: 9-3
- Career Record: 46-6
- Indoor Track and Field Coach for 5 years
- Outdoor Track and Field Coach for 22 years
- Assistant Cross Country Coach for 21 years
- Indoor Track and Field League Champions 2022, 2023
- Outdoor Track and Field League Champions 2004, 2006-09, 2022, 2023
- Seven Top 3 Western Mass finishes
- 27 Western Mass Champions
- Science Teacher for 23 Years

Philosophy: My focus as a coach is building athleticism in each and every athlete on my team. I try to create a positive environment that will motivate kids to want to be at practice and encourage them to be the best they can. Work ethic and growth as a student athlete are two of the main traits I like to see in my athletes.



Track & Field, Outdoor - Girls

Adam Tanguay, Chicopee High School

- Head Girls Outdoor Track and Field Coach for 10 Years
- PVIAC League Champions 2015, 2021
- 12 Individual PVIAC Western Massachusetts Champions
- 3 Vincent Falardeau Award Winners (Top Female T&F athlete in Western MA)
- 5 MIAA Individual State Champions 2022-24
- 2 MIAA Division 1 Central/West Champions 2015
- 4 All New England Qualifiers
- 3 New Balance Nationals Qualifiers
- MIAA Chris Lane Team Sportsmanship Award
- Chicopee High School Social Studies Teacher 2003-Present

Philosophy: As a coach, I am driven to instill a sense of pride and passion in our school and community. The sport of track and field is used as a vehicle for student-athletes to become immersed in their high school experience and actively engage with their team and local community. I place a strong emphasis on "process" with my student-athletes, stressing the importance of setting goals, taking steps to achieve those goals, and understanding that failures or missed goals are not setbacks but learning moments. I work with student-athletes to create a positive environment where dedication, supportive teammates, and hard work is valued above all.



Unified Basketball

Kevin Niceforo, Waltham High School

- Unified Basketball Coach for 5 years
- Started Unified Basketball program in 2019
- MIAA Unified Basketball Team Sportsmanship Award 2019
- Special Olympics Unified Champion School 2021-present
- Unified Basketball Jamboree participant 2022-present
- Team raised over \$1,000 for childhood brain cancer research
- LABBB Collaborative Teaching Assistant
- Assistant Varsity Softball Coach at Central Catholic High School

Philosophy: Our philosophy behind Unified Basketball is to make sport inclusive for all regardless of the challenges that may lie in front of them. It is to make our athletes feel comfortable and important while teaching them basketball skills as they make the journey throughout the season. We strongly believe in creating an experience that they will never forget by including them in something they may never have had a chance to, an organized sport. Most importantly, to have a place where our athletes are not judged, can feel welcome, create new bonds and friendships with our partners, other athletes and other team members. Finally, have all involved play as one UNIFIED TEAM. Supporting someone different, empowers them to be the same!



Unified Track and Field

Lisa Burger, Franklin High School

- MIAA Unified Track and Field Team Sportsmanship Award 2024
- Special Olympics Unified Champion School
- Special Olympics USA Games Gold Medal 2022
- Started Unified Sports Club at Franklin High School
- Coordinates Franklin Middle School Unified Basketball Program
- 22 students qualified for the Unified Track and Field State Championship Meet

Philosophy: Lisa's coaching philosophy is centered around meaningful inclusion. Lisa has helped to build the state's largest unified basketball, track, and now middle school programs. The success of her program is best seen through the friendships that are built as barriers are taken down. Several of her alumni partners have gone on to help build unified programs at their colleges including Bridgewater State.



Volleyball - Fall

Pat Cawley, Canton High School

- 2023-24 Record: 24-1
- Career Record: 303-80
- MIAA Division 2 State Champions 2019
- MIAA Division 2 State Finalists 2023
- 18 Hockomock League Championships
- Massachusetts Volleyball Coaches Association Hall of Fame 2017
- Two-time Boston Globe Division 2 Volleyball Coach of the Year
- New Agenda Northeast Hall of Fame 2019
- HockomockSports.com Coach of the Year 2016, 2019, 2023
- Volleyball Official for 30 Years

Philosophy: High school athletics should provide an opportunity for the student athlete to grow and learn in a supportive, comfortable environment. Through athletics, players gain confidence, learn life-long lessons, make life-long friends, and become life-long leaders. Through athletics, players learn to win and lose graciously. They learn that hard work is necessary to reach the stars. Most of all, players have fun!

NFHS Sectional Coach of the Year Award

In grateful appreciation of outstanding service and unselfish devotion to interscholastic athletics



Basketball - Girls

Lisa Downs, Foxborough High School

- MIAA Division 2 State Champions 2018, 2020, 2023
- Hockomock Sports Coach of the Year 2015, 2020, 2023
- Boston Globe Coach of the Year 2018, 2023
- MBCA Division 2 Coach of the Year 2018
- Deep 4 Sports Talk Coach of the Year 2023
- Foxboro Food Pantry Volunteer

Philosophy: Lisa's philosophy has always been to establish trust with individual players. This in turn creates teammates who are able to trust each other, work collaboratively, and build a foundation from which a successful team can be established. Lisa works hard to build a good reputation for our program and is visible with the youth program in town. Lisa spreads the message that hard work is required to be part of the program, but that work also needs to occur off the basketball court in the classroom and in the community. The success of the program is a huge source of pride to Lisa, but also in the strong relationships that she has built with the players who she was fortunate enough to coach throughout the years.



Field Hockey

John O'Neill, Quaboag Regional Middle/High School

- MIAA Field Hockey State Champions 1988, 1995, 2007
- District E Division 2 Champions 1986-1989, 1994-95, 1998, 2000, 2005-2006, 2008
- Team qualified for the MIAA Field Hockey Tournament 35 consecutive years
- First recipient of the SWCL Excellence in Coaching Award
- Massachusetts State Field Hockey Coaches Association Member and Former President
- MIAA Field Hockey Committee Member

Philosophy: In my coaching journey, I wholeheartedly believe in the power of WE over ME. A successful team is not just a sum of individual talents; it's a family bound together by trust, respect, and a shared vision. My coaching philosophy revolves around nurturing a sense of belonging and unity among all team members. We don't just play as a team; we thrive as a family. I am committed to fostering a welcoming environment where everyone feels valued and appreciated regardless of their background or abilities. In our team, differences are not just accepted; they are celebrated. We create a safe space where everyone is encouraged to voice their ideas, concerns, and aspirations. Together, we build a robust support system that helps each member grow as an athlete and a person.



Football

Brandon Mendez, Old Colony Regional Voc/Tech High School

- Mayflower Athletic Conference Champions 2017, 2021, 2022
- MIAA Division 8 Football Final Four 2022
- New England Patriots High School Coach of the Week
- Mayflower Athletic Conference Coach of the Year 2017, 2021, 2022
- MHSFCA Member
- Old Colony Varsity Softball Head Coach, Student Council Advisor, Strength and Conditioning Coordinator, Basketball Announcer and Scoreboard Operator, Summer Leadership Co-Organizer

Philosophy: Coach Mendez's coaching philosophy of athletics, specifically football, is shown through his emphasis on developing and guiding his players both as student-athletes and as humans. His focus on working hard, overcoming adversity, and achieving goals allows his players to grow and mature during their time in the program. Coach Mendez instills the qualities and skills needed not only to succeed as a football player, but as a community member. Those involved with the program, have seen Brandon's values and beliefs of those around him grow the program and achieve high levels of success. In 2022, Old Colony Football finished the season with the best record in school history and a trip to the MIAA Division 8 Final Four. This season's journey proved the philosophy Coach Mendez has stayed true to for eight years is not only successful on the field, but has created a winning culture for those who are involved.



Ice Hockey - Boys

John Maguire, Waltham High School

- Ice Hockey Coach for 38 seasons
- Career Record: 418-286-98
- MIAA Division 1 State Champions 2002, 2018
- Boston Globe Coach of the Year 2018
- Waltham High School Hall of Fame Inductee
- Massachusetts State Hockey Coaches Association President 2008-2009
- Current MSHSCA Executive Director and Board Member
- MSHCA Hall of Fame 2014
- Three-time recipient of the MIAA James Mulloy Sportsmanship Award

Philosophy: John is all about the student-athlete. He believes in using athletics to help Waltham HS athletes be better people, better students, and better athletes. He has always focused on the athletes developing both on and off the ice. He spends countless hours working with our athletes to make sure they are working hard in the classroom and on the ice. He has always been the example I use when I talk with other coaches about the idea of educational athletics.



Soccer - Boys

Matthew Wheeler, Shrewsbury High School

- Soccer Coach for 12 seasons
- Midland-Wachusett League Champions 2022, 2023
- 12 consecutive seasons qualifying for MIAA tournament
- CMADA Tournament Champions 2022
- Midland-Wachusett League Coach of the Year 2022
- Central Massachusetts Coach of the Year 2016, 2022
- Central Massachusetts Coaches Association Past Treasurer and Vice President
- Shrewsbury High School Class Advisor, Assistant Swim Coach, Assistant Baseball Coach
- Director of Coaching for the Blackstone-Millville Youth Soccer League
- Mach 1 Club Coach

Philosophy: To create an environment where players can develop life skills through the sport of soccer. Players will be challenged to enhance their physical skills along with developing their character and cognitive skills through competition. Players will be treated with a level of professionalism and respect and adopt a team first mentality. Through these expectations and experiences, players will grow on an individual level on and off the field leading to a positive high school athletic career.



Soccer - Girls

Kevin Smith, Mansfield High School

- Soccer Coach for 28 years
- 14 of 18 years team qualified for MIAA tournament
- Hockomock League Champions 2016, 2017, 2018
- Eastern Massachusetts Girls Soccer Association Coach of the Year 2015
- US Youth Soccer East Region Competitive Coach of the Year 2018
- Massachusetts Youth Soccer Competitive Coach of the Year 2018
- Over 200 career wins
- Mathematics (9-12) Teacher for over 20 years

Philosophy: We teach the core values of Integrity, Passion, Sacrifice and Excellence in everything we do and these 4 values provide us a foundation for the program's purpose to develop each player as a leader through the competitive cauldron of athletics ready to positively impact their world. Our entire program volunteers annually at the Mansfield Youth Soccer Columbus Day Tournament and has participated for years in the Mansfield Council of Aging Leaf Raking outreach to senior citizens.



Softball

Stacy Ciccolo, Central Catholic High School

- MIAA Division 1 State Finalists 2023
- MIAA Division 1 North Champions 2013
- MIAA Division 2 North Champions 2008
- Merrimack Valley Conference Champions 2007, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2016, 2023
- Merrimack Valley Conference Coach of the Year 2016, 2023
- Over 300 Career Wins
- Freshman Girls Basketball Coach

Philosophy: Stacy truly believes that athletics is a way to teach important skills that can be used in all parts of someone's life. Stacy is an educator and she uses softball as an extension of her classroom to teach her players to be strong, young women with high values of character, integrity and dedication. When leaving the softball program, the student-athletes have learned what it means to be disciplined, prepared and how to be a leader and a team player. Stacy is extremely competitive and does whatever it takes to put her players in position to be successful on the field while maintaining the importance of the above named characteristics.



Swimming & Diving - Girls

Julie Nocka, Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School

- Swimming and Diving Coach for over 20 years
- MIAA Division 1 Girls Swimming & Diving State Champions 2023
- Boston Globe Girls Swimming & Diving Coach of the Year 2023
- Dual County League Girls Champions—Thorpe Division
- Field Hockey and Lacrosse Game Official for over 30 years
- Central Mass Field Hockey Coaches Association Official of the Year 2004
- High school/Middle school Coach in Crew, Field Hockey, Cross Country, Indoor Track, Lacrosse and Soccer

Philosophy: Coach Nocka passionately believes in the importance of high school sports and the well-rounded development of the student athlete. Coach Nocka cares about her athletes in the water and out. Good sportsmanship, being a good teammate and putting your best effort forth are top priorities. She is equal parts strict and kind. She firmly abides by all of the school and MIAA rules. The consequences for mistakes are clear and equally enforced. Athletes learn quickly once the consequence is served there are no hard feelings or judgments.



Tennis - Boys

Scott Johnson, Plymouth South High School

- Tennis Coach for 10 years
- Patriot League Fisher Division Champions 2023
- Inducted into Plymouth Athletic Hall of Fame 2022
- Freshman Boys Basketball Coach
- JV Girls Soccer Coach
- Volunteer Goalie Coach
- Summer Science Program Teacher for Plymouth Public Schools

Philosophy: When it comes to coaching, for Coach Johnson, it is about much more than the sport itself; it is about teaching student athletes lessons they can use for life. Coach Johnson leads by example, setting high expectations for his players not only on the court, but in the classroom and in the community. His goal is for his players to walk away from tennis knowing how to be competitive, while exemplifying good sportsmanship, and how to be leaders and positive differences makers of the community through building a strong work ethic and always being kind and showing empathy to others.



Wrestling

Peter Boccia, Milford High School

- MIAA Division 2 State Champions 2022, 2023
- MIAA Division 2 West Champions 2022, 2023
- Hockomock League Champions 2013, 2014, 2022, 2023
- Mid-Wach League Champions 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014
- MIWCA Coach of the Year 2022, 2023
- Milford Hall of Fame Committee Member
- Psychology Teacher at Milford High School

Philosophy: My philosophy of athletics is to guide all my student athletes to reach their full potential. I take a holistic approach and emphasize the importance of balancing academics, character development, as well as wrestling skill. I encourage my athletes to not only excel in sports but in the classroom and community. I work hard to teach them life skills such as discipline, resilience, teamwork, and sportsmanship that they can carry on beyond their athletic careers. I focus on having a growth mindset and individual growth and development through short term and long term goal setting. In practice I foster an inclusive environment that strives to make all wrestlers feel valued and respected. During practice I prioritize technical excellence and mental preparation to help my athletes reach their full potential. Lastly, I believe to be an effective teacher/coach, communication and collaboration are the keys to success. I maintain an open and effective communication plan with my athletes, parents, and school community. This helps foster a strong relationship built on trust, transparency, and mutual respect.



MIAA John E. Young Distinguished Service Award

Established in 1990, this award has been reserved for Athletic Directors of recognized accomplishment who also reflect the extraordinarily high personal values and professional standards possessed by Athletic Director John E. Young until his untimely death while serving as MIAA Vice President.



Scott Paine

Scott Paine has been an athletic director for over 20 years. During his career, Scott has guided the athletic programs at Norwell High School, Hull High School and Scituate High School. He is looked up to as a leader, role model and mentor to colleagues at the league, district and state levels.

Scott has served in a variety of leadership positions within the MIAA. He is currently a member of the MIAA Ice Hockey and Tournament Management Committees and has also served on the Girls Lacrosse Committee, COVID Task Force and several subcommittees. Scott recently retired as a MIAA Tournament Director after many years of service at the sectional and state levels in the following sports: Boys Lacrosse (2014-2021), Girls Lacrosse (2019-2021), Boys Ice Hockey (2016-2024), Girls Ice Hockey (2022-2024) and Football (2016-2023).

Through his leadership in these roles, sportsmanship has always been a priority and a point of emphasis for Scott. He is motivated by the opportunity to make a positive impact in the lives of students and creating an outstanding tournament experience for participating students, teams and communities. Scott has served as a host site manager for many MIAA events including Track and Field Championships, Soccer State Finals, Basketball State Semi-Finals and other neutral site events. In addition, he was instrumental in implementing Unified Sports at Scituate High School.

Scott has been recognized for his leadership as a recipient of the MSSADA District Award of Merit (2 times), NIAAA Distinguished Service Award, MIAA Distinguished Service Award and the Andrew James Lawson Foundation Award for Inclusion.

Congratulations to Scott Paine for being selected as the 2024 MIAA John E. Young Distinguished Service Award.



MIAA Distinguished Service Award

*For unique and invaluable service to the thousands of students attending
MIAA member schools across the Commonwealth*



Glenn Doulette

Glenn Doulette has dedicated his career to the advancement of educational athletics. He has served as an athletic director across two decades at Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School, Turners Falls High School and West Springfield High School. Glenn is respected as a leader at the local, district and state levels.

Glenn has a long history of service within the MIAA. He began as a representative of District F/District 1 on the Game Officials Committee and continued in this role for close to a decade. Glenn has been a long time member of the District Athletic Committee, reviewing co-operative team and middle school students on high school team requests. He has served on the MIAA Eligibility Appeals Board, Tennis Committee and Wrestling Committee. Glenn has also been a host site administrator for MIAA Statewide Tournaments in several sports including football, soccer and basketball.

Within the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference, Glenn has been a long-time member of the PVIAC Executive Board. He has served in chair school responsibilities for tennis and recently added chair school responsibilities for wrestling. Glenn is also a mentor for fellow athletic administrators within the PVIAC.

Glenn was a recipient of the Massachusetts Secondary School Athletic Directors Association (MSSADA) Professional Development Award in 2020. This award was presented in recognition of significant contributions and demonstrated excellence in the area of professional development at both the state and local levels.

At the regional level, Glenn played an instrumental role in the success of the New England Student Leadership Conference. Throughout the history of the program, Glenn served as an Adult Delegate and Adult Facilitator during several summers. In these roles, he led large group community service projects, guided action planning for state cohorts and facilitated breakout sessions on the topics of sportsmanship and respect, teamwork and healthy lifestyles and positive values and perspective.

Congratulations to Glenn Doulette for being selected as a recipient of the 2024 MIAA Distinguished Service Award.



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Martha Jamieson

Martha Jamieson retired as the Director of Athletics at Silver Lake Regional High School following the 2023-24 school year. Her retirement marked the conclusion of over four decades as a leader in interscholastic athletics. Her career as a coach and administrator includes service at Bellows Falls High School in Vermont, Haverhill High School, Wayland High School and Silver Lake Regional High School.

Throughout each of these roles, Martha has been a role model and mentor for female student athletes and fellow administrators. She has been a staunch advocate for recruiting and hiring women to coach at all levels, emphasizing the importance of providing female student athletes with role models in their respective sports. Martha assisted in the creation of the first Women in Sport Conference in Vermont in 1986 and played a significant role with MIAA Girls and Women in Sport initiatives for many years.

At the state level, Martha served on the MIAA Basketball Committee and Softball Committee for over two decades. She also chaired the Softball Committee for the 14 years prior to her retirement. Martha provided outstanding leadership in each of these roles, guiding discussions and decisions based upon creating the best possible tournament experience for student-athletes. Martha also served as President of the Massachusetts Secondary School Athletic Directors' Association (MSSADA) in 2010-11.

Martha was the recipient of the MSSADA Ted Damko Award in 2000, presented to athletic administrators having five or less years of experience in the field that have made significant contributions at the school, league, district and state levels and was the Massachusetts recipient of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) Distinguished Service Award in 2016, in recognition of length of service, special accomplishments, and contributions to athletic administration. In 2020, Martha was honored as a recipient of the MIAA Girls and Women in Sports Distinguished Service Award.

In recognition of her outstanding career and leadership, Martha was recently inducted into the Hall of Fame of New Agenda - Northeast and Lynn English High School. Congratulations to Martha Jamieson for being selected as a recipient of the 2024 MIAA Distinguished Service Award.



MIAA Distinguished Service Award

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Mary Lou Thimas

Mary Lou Thimas has been involved in collegiate and interscholastic athletics for over 60 years. During this time, she has served in a variety of roles including Director of Athletics for Women and later as Associate Director of Athletics at Bridgewater State College, Associate Director of Athletics at UMass Dartmouth, Director of Athletics at Framingham North and Framingham South (now Framingham High School), taught at Quincy High School as well as at Marshfield High School and served as the Senior Assistant Commissioner at the Eastern College Athletic Conference.

She has coached basketball, field hockey, lacrosse, and tennis at both the high school and college levels. In her first year teaching physical education at Quincy High School, Mary Lou knew that she wanted to coach. Mary Lou's students asked for support to start a basketball team at the school. She met with the principal who approved the creation of a team if there was enough interest from students. The first meeting of those interested was not very encouraging as only 3-4 students showed up. Mary Lou told the students in order to make the program work, they needed to each bring 2 or 3 friends to the next practice. The team then grew to 13-14 players and played 4 games against local teams. These efforts were the start of girls interscholastic sports at Quincy High School.

Mary Lou has received Hall of Fame Honors as an athlete, coach, administrator and advocate. She has been honored with the MIAA Official of the Year Award for girls lacrosse and the Massachusetts Women in Athletics Distinguished Service Award that was presented at the Massachusetts Girls and Women in Sports Day Ceremony in 2015.

Mary Lou has served over a decade on both the MIAA Field Hockey and Lacrosse Committees as well as the New Agenda/Girls and Women in Sports Committee. She also represented the MIAA on the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Girls Lacrosse Rules Committee. In addition, Mary Lou has officiated post season MIAA tournaments in field hockey and lacrosse for over 50 years in each sport.

Mary Lou said, "I want to express my thanks to all of the teachers, coaches and administrators who paved the way for me in athletics and I hope I can continue their and my voice, enthusiasm and love of sports to those who come after me." Congratulations to Mary Lou Thimas for being selected as a recipient of the 2024 MIAA Distinguished Service Award.



NFHS State Award for Outstanding Service Massachusetts Recipient

In recognition of service and contributions in support of the MIAA and high school athletics

Northeastern University *Center for the Study of Sport in Society*

Founded in 1984, Northeastern University's Center for the Study of Sport in Society is one of the world's leading social impact organizations. Through empirically-proven training and solution-based advocacy, the Center uses the power of sport to create inclusion, challenge the institutionalization of racism, prevent interpersonal violence, provide trauma support, and provide tangible skill sets to circumvent the micro-aggressions of negative normative culture and instead create a new paradigm of empowerment, personal validation, leadership skill acquisition, workforce development, public service, community engagement, and economic empowerment.

The Center has developed curriculum and delivered training to Major League Baseball, for the National Football League, at the South African World Cup, to every branch of the military, for the NFLPA, to every major college conference, to police departments, community groups, and non-profits, to over 140 high schools in Massachusetts in partnership with the Attorney General and the New England Patriots Charitable Foundation, and to hundreds of other high schools; locally, nationally, and internationally.

Through the years, the Center for the Study of Sport in Society has partnered with the MIAA for initiatives such as the Massachusetts Student-Athlete Citizenship Day Ceremonies, MIAA Wellness Summit, MIAA Sportsmanship Summit and a Bullying Prevention Institute. Most recently, in partnership with the Attorney General's Office and several state organizations, Sport in Society staff facilitated a series of Addressing Hate in School Sports Regional Trainings. These trainings were designed to empower school and athletic leaders with the skills and tools requisite to build safe space communities through a deeper understanding of how unconscious bias, toxic speech, and other micro-aggressions, specific to interpersonal incidents of violence, can be identified, responded to, and eradicated. The goal of these trainings was for all school and athletic leaders to leave with concrete tools that can be immediately implemented to prevent and address hate and bias in sports within school districts.

The MIAA is grateful for the partnership with the Center for the Study of Sport in Society in making a difference in the lives of students and school leaders across Massachusetts.

WELLNESS

to empower students to make healthy life choices

SPORTSMANSHIP

to teach respect for self, team, opponents, officials, rules, and the game itself

COACHES' EDUCATION

to provide resources for teacher-coaches who serve as curriculum instructors of educational athletics

LEADERSHIP

to promote the power of positive influence that student athletes and teacher-coaches share as role models

COMMUNITY SERVICE

to recognize the privilege of athletic participation and the responsibility of giving back to the community



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