

24th Annual Minnesota Girls and Women in Sports Day

25 athletes and sports leaders to be recognized

Wednesday, February 3 – 12 p.m. at the Minnesota State Capitol

Some of Minnesota's most inspiring and influential student-athletes, coaches and athletic leaders will be recognized at an award ceremony on Wednesday, February 3, at the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul. The award ceremony will be conducted in conjunction with the 24th annual National Girls and Women in Sports Day, a nationwide celebration recognizing the accomplishments of individuals in the promotion and advancement of girls' and women's sports. The 2010 ceremony will be honoring 25 individuals who will be receiving awards in five separate categories. Award recipients are nominated by schools, community organizations, recreation centers, and amateur and professional sports organizations. All are invited to attend this special event. Details about award winners are below.



The Marie Berg Award for Excellence in Education - Liz Erickson, Austin. Erickson currently serves as pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church in Elkton, MN. She taught middle school and high school health and physical education in Lake City, MN, while coaching volleyball and basketball. Erickson also worked for many years at the state girls tennis, volleyball, basketball, gymnastics, and track tournaments. As an athlete, teacher, coach, tournament worker, parent and advocate she has been and continues to be an avid promoter of girls athletics. As an athlete Erickson played in the first game of the first single season state girls basketball tournament at the Met Center in 1976, participated on the Austin High track team that placed 2nd in the state meet, and played on the AHS volleyball team that played in the state tournament in 1975. Erickson was the first female athlete inducted into the Austin High School Hall of Fame in 1992.



The Girls' and Women's Sports in the Media Award - Becky Bohm, University of Minnesota. Bohm is currently the Associate Director of Athletic Communications at University of Minnesota. She has spent over 20 years in the athletic communications profession and is in her 14th year at Minnesota. Prior to coming to Minnesota, she was the sports information director at Wisconsin-Platteville. Bohm has always taken the approach that every one of her athletes has a story to tell. She has promoted women's sports by telling their stories so fans know them as people, not just athletes. Her coverage of women's athletics has allowed young women to be portrayed in a positive light, showing them as the excellent role models they are. As an athlete, Bohm was a four-time varsity track letterwinner and four-time academic-all conference honoree at Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Bohm has won several publication awards from CoSIDA (College Sports Information Directors of America) for her work in the sports information field.



The Wilma Rudolph Award for Courage and Inspiration - Elissa Reinsma, Murray County Central High School. Reinsma is currently a junior at Murray County Central High School where she participates in volleyball, softball and wrestling. She maintains a 3.82 GPA while being a member of the National Honor Society and her local youth group. She has been named all-conference and all-region in volleyball and softball and was a state qualifier in wrestling -- the first female to ever compete in the state wrestling tournament. Reinsma hopes her participation in wrestling will inspire young girls to do whatever they want to do. She believes in giving it her all -- all the time. She has been named Student of the Month as well as Athlete of the Month four times during her time at Murray County Central High School.



Special Merit Award - Janet Carpenter, Minnetonka. Carpenter has been a pioneer and role model for those in the figure skating world. She was a member of the 1952 Olympic team, where she won sixth place in Pairs with partner John Nightingale. During the 1984 Olympics in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia, she served as team manager for the US Figure Skating Team, the first woman to hold this position. In 1988 and 2002 Carpenter served as an Olympic judge for Men's figure skating and has also judged US Figure Skating and the World Championships. She is a member of the St. Paul Figure Skating Club, where she judges locally at all levels. Carpenter is a committee member of the Minnesota Skating Scholarship Awards, where they have awarded over \$100,000 to Minnesota skaters for their training expenses. Carpenter received the Ski U Mah Award from the University of Minnesota and earned the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce Minneapolis Award and the Centennial Champions Award. She received the Professional Skaters Association Distinguished Judge Award (1999), Lifetime Achievement Award from the St. Paul Figure Skating Club and is a member of the Minnesota Olympic Wall of Fame.



Special Merit Award - Elaine Engle, Willmar. Engle has served as a coach and educator in Minnesota and Wisconsin, giving much to the promotion and development of high school athletics in a career that has touched five decades. She has coached track and gymnastics and has been a swimming official for more than 30 years. Engle is credited with starting the girls' golf program at Willmar from scratch, a program she continued to coach until 2003. In 1985 her girls golf team won the Minnesota State title, one of only three teams at Willmar to do so. In June 2004 she became the first female inducted into the Minnesota State High School Golf Coaches Association Hall of Fame and was also the first woman inducted into the MSHS Coaches Association Hall of Fame. Engle has been named the MSHSCA Girls Golf Coach of the Year twice (1990, 1991). In 2005 she was inducted into the Willmar High School Hall of Fame and in 2007 was given the MSHSCA Distinguished Service Award for Officials for 40 years of officiating service.



Special Merit Award - John Leaney, Macalester College. Leaney has a 24-year history of coaching college women's soccer, 23 of those years at Macalester College where he built the Scots into a national power. He has mentored numerous former players and assistants who are currently head coaches or assistant coaches at the college, club and high school levels. Leaney coached the NCAA Division III National Championship team in 1998, and has coached the Macalester women to three final four appearances (1986, 1998 and 1999). He has coached his teams to eight MIAC Championships, the most of any conference school. He coached a national player of the year and 15 All-Americans. The 1998 NCAA Division III Coach of the Year, Leaney has been honored as conference and region coach of the year numerous times and is a member of Athletic Hall of Fame at Macalester College.



Special Merit Award - All American RedHeads, Connie Howe, Diane Martinson, Gretchen Pinz Hyink, Sherri Mattson, Lynnea Sjoquist and Lynnette Sjoquist. The All American RedHeads were one of the first professional women's basketball teams. The RedHeads were a touring exhibition team who always competed against men. They played seven days a week for seven months out of the year, averaging about 200 ball games a season, traveling to a different city and town each day. The goal of the All American RedHeads was to win games but also win approval for girls and women participating in sports---they carried the banner for women playing basketball and playing it well. The All American RedHeads have been honored as a team by the Women's Basketball Hall of Fame in Knoxville, Tennessee where an elaborate display for the RedHeads has been created by using one of the stretch limousines they traveled in along with uniforms and life size cut outs of players.

2010 Breaking Barriers Awards

Jessica Angell Allen	Harding High School	Jason McCloskey	Waubun-Omega-White Earth Community Schools
Libby Auger	College of St. Benedict	Kari Meek	Royalton High School
Barb Beise	Wayzata High School	Heather Phillips	Rochester Century High School
Marlene Brodt	Women's Hockey Association of Minnesota	Sheryl Raitel	Bloomington Kennedy High School
D'Ann Brosnahan	Minneapolis & St. Paul Athena Committees	Rick Ringeisen	Lakeville South High School
Shawn Johnson-Hipp	Hamline University	Charlita Williamson	Thomas Edison High School
Judy Long	Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center		YWCA Minneapolis Strong Fast Fit Youth Program

Minnesota Girls and Women in Sports Day is sponsored by the Minnesota Coalition of Women in Athletic Leadership.

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