



Official of the Year

2019-2020

— Congratulations —

These officials are being recognized for their outstanding service to all MIAA student-athletes and for their commitment to the promotion of Educational Athletics.

This award has been established to recognize and acknowledge their individual achievement but also to validate the vital work our 6,000+ officials in MA do each and every season. Game officials serve as “educators of the game” and are major component of high school athletics. We thank them for their efforts to support the highest ideals of sportsmanship, fair play and athletic achievement.



Listed below are the recognized officials, their region where they officiate and their personal philosophy. Thank you to each and every MIAA official; without you, student-athletes would not have competition. Although usually recognized in May of each academic year, a complete program including years of service and additional accolades will be available at the rescheduled recognition banquet this fall.

BASEBALL

MIKE SULLIVAN, *North Shore, MA*: “For every student that participates, high school athletics are an integral part of their maturation process. The lessons learned from a coach in practices and games, the interactions with teammates, and the ability to understand and respect the officials in a contest are going to be instances that one can draw from for the rest of their life. My goal is to ensure a fair contest where all participants are respected, while players learn from and enjoy the experience of participating in a competition.”

BASKETBALL (Boys)

BRUCE ANDERSON, *Southeastern, MA*: “The life lessons taught at every level are building blocks which teach social skills, teamwork, confidence, and sportsmanship. Athletics give us so much more than we could ever give the sport, providing invaluable life lessons that stay with us throughout our life.”

BASKETBALL (Girls)

JULIE RUANE, *Northeastern, MA*: “Making commitments to ourselves, our teammates, coaches and parents requires many qualities, in particular, accountability. Developing those qualities at an early age is a solid start on the path to success. Building friendships and maintaining relationships is essential when part of a team.”

CROSS COUNTRY

STANLEY “LEY” RICKER, *Central, MA*: “Athletics offers the benefit of participation where students gain self-confidence, learn teamwork, sportsmanship and responsibility which are all life skills. Developing a strong work ethic and leadership skills are lifelong benefits on the road to succeed.”

FIELD HOCKEY

JULIE HALLORAN, *Boston, MA*: “My philosophy on interscholastic sports has evolved throughout my years of playing, coaching and officiating. Interscholastic sports contribute in a major way to the physical, mental and social development of students. Everyone involved in interscholastic sports has a responsibility to instill and promote good sportsmanship and character by exhibiting behaviors of a positive role model. It is important that everyone embrace that role.”

FOOTBALL

PETER OCHS, *Berkshire County, MA*: “Interscholastic sport programs provide lifelong lessons that teach respect for self, teammates, and authority. To set life goals and achieve those goals; establish work ethic and the ability to work toward a common goal; and, lastly, the ability to deal with set-backs and overcome adversity in life.”

GYMNASTICS (Girls)

JEANNE PECKHAM, *Eastern/Central, MA*: “I’ve been committed to gymnastics since my young daughters began classes and when I received a judging rating to understand the scoring. As a director for a gym and dance program, I understand the work that went into this sport on the part of the girls and their coaches. I’ve loved judging gymnastics and being a mother and coach has given me an understanding of the agony and ecstasy that is involved in this sport.”

ICE HOCKEY (Boys)

THOMAS FYRER, *Eastern, MA*: “Watching young adults grow, compete and learn to work as part of a team, while both winning and losing, provides a solid foundation as any individual prepares for what is next in life. The challenge of being a role model for players, coaches and spectators on how to deal with difficult situations as they arise motivates me as I step on the ice for any contest.”

ICE HOCKEY (Girls)

THOMAS MURRAY, *Cape Cod, MA*: “My philosophy when I officiate an MIAA contest is to be fair to both teams, to be knowledgeable of the rules, and to hustle the entire game. I strive to create an atmosphere where the student-athlete can showcase their talents. I believe that playing sports allows the student-athlete to develop life-long learning skills such as teamwork, leadership, and communication that will guide them as they continue on their personal road to adulthood.”

LACROSSE (Boys)

ANTHONY CORDANI, *Eastern, MA*: “I believe athletics is the extension of the students’ education. The life lessons that sports teach will benefit the student-athletes for the rest of their lives. Learning to compete to the best of their abilities and work within a team, and facing adversity are all life-long skills.”

LACROSSE (Girls)

TERI RIGGS, *Eastern, MA*: “Athletics are an integral educational partner that enhances the lives of those involved, and greatly contributes to the overall physical, emotional and academic development of our youth. Athletics offer the opportunity to understand teamwork and commitment towards a common goal, these are learned skills that can be carried through an individual’s lifetime.”

SOCCER (Boys)

RIC BEAUDOIN, *Eastern, MA*: “I am a firm believer that all state high school athletics are an extension of physical education programs. This approach translates directly to the model that all athletic fields of competition mirror the classroom environment. Hence, as officials, we should all be guardians of fair play, good sportsmanship, and accountability for our behavior.”

SOCCER (Girls)

LEAH MURPHY, *Eastern, MA*: “I have thoroughly enjoyed the ongoing interaction with the youth and other referees. I have learned so much and taken advantage of the mentorship gained from all the veteran officials. To do your best in every aspect of life, including your representation on and off the court, is the most important thing to me.”

SOFTBALL

LOUIS PEARLSTEIN, *North Shore, MA*: “My philosophy of officiating sports has been to apply a pattern of behavior which supports the positive learning experiences in sports as an extension of our academic activities. I must create and maintain an environment which supports professionalism, hustle, sportsmanship and ethics in all my activities in my officiating or in my role as an official demonstrating my love of the game and respecting all the people who are necessary to create this learning activity.”

SWIMMING & DIVING (Fall)

BARBARA “CAM” TOWNSEND, *Eastern, MA*: “Athletics are a perfect complement to academics. They promote an active lifestyle which improves fitness, mental health, and reduces stress. Participants learn about teamwork and commitment, develop a sense of belonging, and develop lifelong friendships and skills.”

SWIMMING & DIVING (Winter)

WILLIAM “BILL” WHIGHAM, *Western, MA*: “I believe that every athletic event is a macrocosm of life itself. Athletics is the place where kids learn how to love life. Athletics is the discipline where children learn the values of commitment, responsibility and cooperation. Athletics is where athletes learn how to respect each other in competition; that it is okay to fail and to win with humility and lose with dignity. Athletics is the place where children learn to manage their time and work with others as a team. I believe that all athletes, regardless of their level of ability and performance should have officials of the highest quality that model the values we strive to bring about in our students.”

TRACK & FIELD, INDOOR

MICHELLE COTE, *Central, MA*: “Athletics brings a sense of pride to those who participate. Life lessons that you see the students learning during practice and competition such as empathy, perseverance and determination are miraculous to be part of and witness. I get no greater joy than to see the winner of a race remain at the finish line to congratulate fellow competitors. To watch a student with disabilities exude a sense of pride at the competition of a race can't be matched.”

TRACK & FIELD, OUTDOOR

LINDA GEORGE, *MA Track and Field Association*: “My philosophy is making track a positive experience so the student-athletes will continue with the sport. An athlete's only competition is themselves and accomplishing their personal best.”

VOLLEYBALL (Boys)

KEVIN McDERMOTT, *Merrimack Valley, MA*: “It is quite simple: do what you love, play/ref by the rules and with integrity and give back to your sport. I take the most satisfaction and pride in the

training clinics for new officials which I and the other members of my board run. Volleyball officiating must keep pace with the rapidly improving skill level of today's players, while at the same time maintaining the integrity of how volleyball should be played."

VOLLEYBALL (Girls)

MICHAEL SIMMARANO, *Central, MA*: "With the wide variety of sports being offered, we need to provide all student-athletes with a healthy, safe and competitive environment. Emphasis needs to be placed on good sportsmanship and leadership. Respect for teammates, opposing players, rules and officials, regardless of the level of competition, should be exhibited to provide a positive educational experience."

WRESTLING

DANIEL J. BUCKLEY, SR., *MA Interscholastic Wrestling Officials Assoc.*: "Athletics taught me self-discipline, hard work, the value of teamwork and mental toughness. Most importantly it taught me that you control your own destiny in life and that you always have control over what you do tomorrow. When officiating I'm also cognizant of being fair, impartial and competent so that today's student-athletes learn the same life lessons that I did while participating in Athletics."



EDUCATIONAL ATHLETICS

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