



## NEWS RELEASE

NATIONAL INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

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### Mike Blackburn of Indiana to Receive NIAAA Award of Merit

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (November 18, 2011) — **Dr. Mike Blackburn**, CMAA, associate executive director of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) is the 2011 recipient of the Award of Merit presented by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA).

Blackburn will receive his award December 13 in Indianapolis, Indiana, during banquet festivities at the 42<sup>nd</sup> annual National Athletic Directors Conference conducted jointly by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the NIAAA.

The Award of Merit is the most prestigious award presented by the NIAAA to an individual who has shown outstanding leadership in interscholastic athletics or related areas.

Blackburn has served as associate executive director of the NIAAA since 2005 after an outstanding 28-year career as director of athletics/assistant principal at Northwestern High School in Kokomo, Indiana.

In his seven years with the NIAAA national office, Blackburn has helped raise membership by 3,500 to its current total of 8,700. He has been instrumental in the NIAAA process of North Central Association accreditation, development and implementation of the NIAAA Hall of Fame, and the continual expansion of the Leadership Training Institute.

In addition, he serves on the Athletic Directors Advisory Committee and works with state liaisons. Blackburn also serves as publisher of the **Interscholastic Athletic Administration** (IAA) magazine, which has become fiscally profitable for the NIAAA while increasing from 32 to 56 pages.

Blackburn earned a bachelor's degree from Indiana State University and was a teacher and coach at two Indiana high schools for five years before becoming director of athletics at Northwestern High School in 1977. While serving as an assistant principal responsible for athletics in his final two years, Blackburn directed a program involving 20-sports, 70 teams and more than 100 coaches.

During his tenure at Northwestern, Blackburn implemented a key academic-athletic recognition program; hosted more than 500 state, conference, county or invitational contests; and developed a multi-sport recognition program that resulted in approximately 75 percent of students participating in athletics.

In addition to his administrative duties, Blackburn was involved extensively at the state and national levels of high school athletic administration for many years. Blackburn was president of the Indiana Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (IIAAA) in 1994-95 and served on its Board of Directors from 1991 to

2005. From 1997 until his move to the NIAAA office, he was IIAAA secretary and state liaison to the NIAAA.

Within the Indiana High School Athletic Association (IHSAA), Blackburn served on the IHSAA Board of Directors and Executive Committee from 1995 to 2001 and was vice president of each group. He was a member of numerous IHSAA committees and chaired the Public-Private School Committee and the Rule 15 Participation Study Committee.

At the national level, Blackburn has been involved extensively with the NIAAA. He was a member of the Publications Committee for 13 years and served as vice chair beginning in 2001 and co-chair in 2005. He has prepared more than 100 articles and editorials published in **IAA** magazine. He has presented at numerous national and state functions, and served the NFHS Advisory Committee from 2001 to 2004.

Blackburn earned his Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) designation in 1991 and became a Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA) in 2001. He has completed 34 Leadership Training Courses.

Among his many awards, Blackburn received the NIAAA Distinguished Service Award in 2000 and the NFHS Citation in 1998. He was chosen Indiana Athletic Director of the Year in 1996 and was NASPE Midwest Athletic Director of the Year. Blackburn received the NIAAA State Award of Merit in 1997. Last year, he was selected to the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) Presidential Hall of Fame.

Blackburn earned his master's from St. Francis (Indiana) College in 1976, as well as his Ed.S. in 2002, and his Ph.D. in 2007 from Indiana State.

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**About the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA)**

The NIAAA is the largest national organization for high school athletic administrators with more than 8,500 individual members. The NIAAA consists of athletic director organizations in the 50 states plus the District of Columbia and provides an efficient system for exchange of ideas between the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and state athletic administrators organizations as well as individual athletic administrators. The NIAAA, located in Indianapolis, Indiana, strives to preserve the educational nature of interscholastic athletics and the place of these programs in the curricula of schools. The NIAAA is a full and equal partner with the NFHS.

### **About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)**

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.6 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

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