



## NEWS RELEASE

### NATIONAL INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION

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## High School Athletic Administration Leaders to Receive Top NIAAA Awards

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (November 30, 2018) — Three leaders in high school athletic administration have been selected by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) to receive the organization's top awards for 2018.

**Gary Stevens**, CMAA, director of student activities at Thornton Academy in Saco, Maine, is the recipient of the NIAAA Frank Kovalski Professional Development Award; **Doug Killgore**, CMAA, recently retired assistant principal and athletic director of Central Arkansas Christian School in North Little Rock, Arkansas, has been selected to receive the NIAAA Thomas E. Frederick Award of Excellence; and **Phil Rison**, CMAA, associate executive director of the NIAAA in Indianapolis, Indiana, is this year's recipient of the NIAAA Award of Merit.

These individuals will receive their awards December 18 in San Antonio, Texas, during banquet festivities at the 49<sup>th</sup> annual National Athletic Directors Conference conducted jointly by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the NIAAA.

## **NIAAA Frank Kovaleski Professional Development Award**

**Gary Stevens, CMAA**

**Saco, Maine**

Gary Stevens, CMAA, has become one of the key leaders in athletic administration in the state of Maine – and nationally with the NIAAA – the past 22 years during his positions at Bonny Eagle High School in Standish and Thornton Academy in Saco.

Academically, Stevens has always been at the head of his class. He was valedictorian of his class at Mattanawcook Academy in Lincoln, Maine; graduated cum laude from Harvard College; and posted a 4.0 grade-point average in earning his master's from the University of Southern Maine. He earned an additional master's from St. Joseph's College of Maine in 2015.

Stevens was a teacher and coach at two schools in Maine, including his alma mater, for seven years to begin his career in education. He coached basketball, volleyball, softball, cross country, baseball and soccer. Stevens moved to Bonny Eagle High School in 1990, where he taught social studies for eight years and added the duties of activities director in 1996 and assistant principal in 1998. Stevens was activities director at Bonny Eagle for 11 years until moving to his current position of director of student activities at Thornton Academy in 2007.

Stevens has been president of the Southwestern Maine Activities Association (SMAA) and Southern Maine Middle School Athletic Conference and was president and secretary of the SMAA Sportsmanship Committee.

At the state level, Stevens has devoted many hours to the Maine Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA) and the Maine Principals Association (MPA). After serving on the MIAAA Board of Directors and several MIAAA committees, Stevens is currently the assistant executive director of the association. He organizes the association's annual fall conference, oversees its Professional Development Program for new athletic directors, and serves as editor and writer for the MIAAA News. Within the state's governing body, Stevens has been chair of the MPA Basketball, Tennis, Cheerleading and Lacrosse Committees.

While Stevens has contributed to the NIAAA in many ways over the years, his contributions as a writer and his work with the NIAAA Publications Committee and the **Interscholastic Athletic Administration (IAA)** Magazine are unparalleled. Stevens served on the Publications Committee for eight years, including two years as vice-chair, and he has written

more than 80 articles for the **IAA**. He also has authored a chapter on contest management for the NIAAA's *Guide to Interscholastic Athletic Administration*.

Stevens recently completed a term on the NIAAA Board of Directors and was chairman of the Marketing Subcommittee. He also was a member of the NIAAA Blue Ribbon Panel in 2010. Stevens has taught Leadership Training courses in six states and has personally taken 48 courses since his first one in 2001.

Among his other national contributions, Stevens is a member of the Advisory Board of the National Center for Spectator Sport Safety and Security in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

Stevens' commitment to education has earned him many awards, including the NIAAA Distinguished Service Award in 2010, the NFHS Citation in 2016, the MIAAA Gerald Durgin Leadership Award, the MIAAA Martin Ryan Award of Excellence and the MIAAA Athletic Administrator of the Year Award.

### **NIAAA Thomas E. Frederick Award of Excellence**

#### **Doug Killgore, CMAA**

#### **North Little Rock, Arkansas**

Doug Killgore retired earlier this year from his administrative duties at Central Arkansas Christian School in North Little Rock, Arkansas after a 16-year run as assistant principal and athletic director, although he continues as a full-time substitute teacher. He is in his third stint at the school, having served as a coach, teacher and athletic director (two years) from 1975 to 1981 and as a teacher and coach from 1994 to 2000.

Killgore started at Central Arkansas Christian School in 1975 after earning his bachelor's degree from Harding (Arkansas) College and his performer's certificate in vocal performance from North Texas State University (now the University of North Texas) in Denton, Texas.

During his final 16 years as the school's athletics/activities director, Killgore supervised 15 sports, 54 teams with 18 coaches and 16 volunteers in grades 3-12. Ten Central Arkansas Christian teams won a total of 26 state championships under Killgore's guidance with 15 second-place finishes. Killgore also supervised the fine arts department (band, choir, drama) working with instruction, curriculum and scheduling.

Although Killgore has been an NIAAA member for only 16 years, he probably has given more time to the state and national levels of athletic administration than most people with twice the years of service.

Killgore's service to the Arkansas High School Athletic Administrators Association (AHSAAA) is extensive, having served in a leadership role from 2006 to 2015, including a two-year term as president (2011-13). He has given numerous presentations at the state conference and has been chair of the New Athletic Directors Orientation Committee since 2005. He also has been involved with the Arkansas High School Coaches Association, including a workshop presenter at four state conferences.

The Arkansas Activities Association (AAA) has also benefited from Killgore's contributions to interscholastic athletics as he was director of eight state soccer tournaments and five state girls golf championships.

Nationally, Killgore is one of the most visible faces at the National Athletic Directors Conference each year for two reasons. First, he has been one of the NIAAA's busiest people the past 10 years and, second, he is highly distinguishable with his annual assortment of bow ties and is often referred to as Mr. Bow Tie.

Killgore served six years (2010-16) as secretary on the NIAAA Board of Directors, and he has been a valuable contributor to the NIAAA Leadership Training Institute (LTI). Since 2004, Killgore has served on the LTI Faculty and has taught 21 separate courses along the way. Killgore has been the state coordinator since 2004 and has personally taken 35 Leadership Training courses.

In 2017, Killgore was a member of the Section 1 Summer Institute Faculty and the International Conference Faculty in Bangkok, Thailand. He has made workshop presentations at the National Athletic Directors Conference on four occasions.

Killgore, who has had three articles published in *Interscholastic Athletic Administration* Magazine, was the recipient of the NFHS Citation in 2010 and the NIAAA State Award of Merit in 2012. In 2008, he was named AHSAAA Athletic Director of the Year, and earlier this year he was inducted into the AHSAAA Hall of Fame.

## **NIAAA Award of Merit**

**Phil Rison, CMAA**

**Indianapolis, Indiana**

Phil Rison, CMAA, has served as associate executive director of the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (NIAAA) since June 2016 after an outstanding 30-year career as a high school teacher, coach, athletic director and administrator in Kentucky.

Rison, who earned his bachelor's degree from Eastern Kentucky University in 1985 and his master's from Morehead State University in 1992, began his career as a teacher and coach for one year at Paris High School and then for seven years at Montgomery County High School. After one year as assistant principal/athletic director at Harrison County High School, Rison served as a teacher and coach at Estill County High School for two years.

Rison's long-term devotion to school administration began in 1997 when he returned to Montgomery County High School as assistant principal and athletic director. After serving in that position for six years, Rison was promoted to director of operations of the Montgomery County Schools for five years, followed by a seven-year term as assistant superintendent.

In 2015, Rison was named executive director of the Kentucky High School Athletic Directors Association (KHSADA), and he served in that role for one year before joining the NIAAA national office staff. Rison's year as KHSADA executive director culminated 20 years of service to the organization, including a term as KHSADA president from 2004 to 2006.

Additionally, Rison played a key role in the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA), serving as a KHSAA policy board member for 18 years and chairman for 12 years. As a KHSAA tournament manager, Rison handled district and regional basketball, sectional soccer and regional baseball events. He also was KHSAA delegate representative for 21 years.

Nationally, Rison was highly involved with the NIAAA prior to joining the staff 2½ years ago. He was a Leadership Training National Faculty member for 10 years and taught all Leadership Training legal courses, including serving as chair of Leadership Training Course 508, Legal Issues III. Altogether, Rison has taken 28 Leadership Training courses.

Rison was a member of the NIAAA Board of Directors from 2010 to 2014, including a term as president in 2013. He also was an NFHS Coach Education Program instructor for 11

years and has earned his AIC (Accredited Interscholastic Coach) designation through the NFHS. With the NIAAA, Rison earned his Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) certification in 1998 and his Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA) title in 2005.

Rison has earned numerous other awards during his career. In 1992, he was the Teacher of the Year for the Montgomery County Schools; in 2003, he was named Kentucky Athletic Director of the Year; in 2006, he received the NIAAA State Award of Merit and was inducted into the 10<sup>th</sup> Region Coaches Association Hall of Fame; and, in 2007, he received the NIAAA Distinguished Service Award.

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

The NIAAA is the professional organization for interscholastic athletic administrators. The association is accredited by AdvancED and North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement. Based in Indianapolis, Indiana, the NIAAA promotes and enhances the profession of athletic administration for high school and middle school athletic administrators. Since 1977, the NIAAA has served those who lead education-based athletic programs in the nation's schools. With current individual membership of nearly 11,000, the NIAAA consists of members from athletic administrator associations in the 50 states, and the District of Columbia, as well as over 40 international countries. Through its 48-course curriculum, and four levels of certification, the NIAAA is the national leader in providing professional development for athletic administrators, directors, coordinators, and supervisors, as well as those serving in assistant principal/athletic director, or activity/athletic director combined roles that lead school-based sports programs. While providing best-practices and serving as a resource for safe and plentiful participation opportunities for student-athletes, the NIAAA places further focus on member benefits, standards, communication, outreach, and recognition, while emphasizing the exchange of ideas among athletic administrators throughout the nation and the world. NIAAA champions the profession of athletic administration through education opportunities, advocating ethics, developing leaders and fostering community. The NIAAA, located in Indianapolis, Indiana, is a full and equal partner with the NFHS. For more information, visit the NIAAA website at [www.niaaa.org](http://www.niaaa.org).

#### **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 16 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 19,500 high schools and 12 million participants in high school activity programs, including almost 8 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 website at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

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