Hall of Fame awards event for 2014 hosted by
New Jersey Scholastic Coaches Association and
New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association

March 30 at Pines Manor, Edison

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ (March 25, 2014) - The New Jersey Scholastic Coaches Association (NJSCA) -- in cooperation with the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) -- will host its annual Hall of Fame Awards program this Sunday (March 30), at Pines Manor, in Edison. Thirty-seven New Jersey high school coaches will be inducted.

In addition, coaches and officials recognized at the national level by the National Federation of Coaches Association (NFCA) and the National Federation of Officials Association (NFOA) will be honored during the event.

- A list of this year’s NJSCA inductees is available at http://tinyurl.com/phnhj43.
- A list of this year’s NFCA Coach of the Year honorees is available at http://tinyurl.com/k9zh3px.
- A list of this year’s NFOA honorees is available at http://tinyurl.com/l44j6oe.

Gerry Matthews, head coach of men’s basketball at Richard Stockton University and the winningest college basketball coach in the history of New Jersey, will also be a key honoree during the festivities.

“Each coach inducted into the Hall of Fame is a commendable teacher, leader and role model for our young athletes,” says NJSIAA Executive Director Steve Timko. “They continue to set a good example on and off the field and these 2014 inductees set the bar high for current and future coaches throughout New Jersey.”

The Hall of Fame program honors coaches from all sports in New Jersey’s public, non-public and independent secondary schools. All Hall of Fame inductees have exhibited exceptional coaching skills during their careers, along with strong ethics and integrity, not only for their own sports, but for all interscholastic sports programs and events.

Official sponsors of this year’s Hall of Fame awards luncheon are Wilson; the Star-Ledger; and Blue Ribbon Awards, Inc.

Information on attending the event is available online at http://tinyurl.com/pf3anbl.

About the NJSIAA
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###
New Jersey Scholastic Coaches Association
North-South Senior All-Star Basketball Games
players and coaches announced

Boys and girls games at Rider University on Sunday, March 23

TRENTON, NJ (March 20, 2014) – A total of 75 athletes and 13 coaches have been selected for the upcoming New Jersey Scholastic Coaches Association (NJSCA) Senior North-South All Star Game.

The games are slated for Sunday, March 23 at the Alumni Gym at Rider University in Lawrenceville, NJ. The boy’s game will be at noon and the girl’s will follow at 2:30 p.m. Both games will feature North vs. South format. Admission is $5.

The teams are as follows:

North Boys
Coaches:
Mark Cacciacarne (head coach) – West Orange
Juan Griles (1st assistant) – Paterson Eastside
Joe Finizio (2nd assistant) – Tenafly

Players:
Nadi Beciri – Bergen Catholic                Glen Nanius – North Warren
Juwuan Carter – DePaul Catholic              Ve'Shawn Polite – Elmwood Park Memorial
Devine Eke – Union Catholic                   David Runcie – Columbia
Sean Hoehn – Morristown                        Ismael Sanogo – East Side Newark
Juwaan Jones – Linden                          Jordan Sears – Plainfield
Paul Jorgenson – Don Bosco                     Tarin Smith – Saint Anthony
Abdul Lewis – East Side Newark                 Austin White – St. Peter’s Prep
JR Lynch – Hudson Catholic                     Alex Thomas – Hawthorne Christian
Stef Minic – Passaic Valley

South Boys
Coaches:
Mike Fries (head coach) – Cinnaminson
Rory Caswell (1st assistant) – Toms River North
Scott Kupersmit (2nd assistant) – Burlington Township

Players:
Wade Baldwin – Saint Joe’s of Metuchen        Nick Davidson – Rancocas Valley Regional
Amir Bell – East Brunswick                    Matt Farrell – Point Pleasant Beach
Shaun Brooks – Pemberton Township              Brandon George – Trenton Central
Flo DaSilva – Bishop Eustace                   Mike Gesicki – Southern Regional
Isiah Graves – Atlantic City
Rashaan Holloway – AP Schalick
Jay Howard – Paul VI
Matt Klinewski – Eastern
Jordan Robertson – Wildwood Catholic

North Girls
Coaches:
Jeff Koehler (head coach) – Tenafly
Joe Gaba (1st assistant) – Chatham
Scott Papetti (2nd assistant) – Paramus
Mike Kilgallen (3rd assistant) – Bergenfield

Players:
Imani Brown – Jefferson Township
Doniyah Cliney – Malcolm X Shabazz
Breanna Dennis – Immaculate Conception
Madison Dunbar – Northern Highlands Regional
Ashunae Durant – Bloomfield Tech
Kayla Gibbs – Teaneck
Alexa Giuliano – Morris Catholic
Katherine Haines – Ridgefield Park
Aliyah Huland El – Randolph
Brielle Kelly – West Morris Central

South Girls
Coaches:
Rachel Goodale (head coach) – Jackson Memorial
Anthony Corrado (1st assistant) – Rancocas Valley
Lisa Kukoda (2nd assistant) – Manasquan

Players:
Olivia Askin – Shawnee
Alliya Butts – Holy Cross
Dana Carbone – Monsignor Donovan
Lauryn Fields – Middle Township
Katelynn Flaherty – Metuchen
Kylie Giedemann – Washington Township
Kelly Giedemann – Washington Township
Kennedy Johnson – Wildwood Catholic
Sarah Kurtz – Saint Rose
Jada Matthews – Winslow Township
Lauren Moses – Rancocas Valley

Juni or Saintel – Holy Spirit
Eric Stafford – Pitman
Marques Townes – Saint Joe’s of Metuchen
Dom Uhl – Point Pleasant Beach

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The annual event will feature a girls and boys doubleheader championship -- showcasing New Jersey’s finest high school basketball teams -- with the girls game tipping off first, at 6:30 p.m. The boys contest begins shortly after the conclusion of the girls game. Tickets are currently available for purchase at the venue.

“Every year, the best high school basketball players in the state come together to compete for championship titles,” says Steve Timko, executive director of the NJSIAA, which numbers 438 accredited public, private, and parochial New Jersey high schools as its members. “These players worked hard all season to get to this point and now they’ll have the chance to display their talent at an outstanding venue. We’re always looking forward to this exciting event and can’t wait to see the outcome.”

The NJSIAA has partnered with Global Spectrum, the company that manages the Sun National Bank Center, to create the best possible experience for players and fans during the upcoming championship games.

Tickets for the NJSIAA Tournament of Champions final games are $8 for adults and are available online at www.ComcastTIX.com; by phone at 1-800-298-4200; or in person at the Sun National Bank Center Box Office. Student/senior/child $2 tickets will be available for purchase at the Sun National Bank Center Box Office exclusively on the day of the event. All tickets are general admission and are valid for both games. Additional details are available at www.sunnationalbankcenter.com.

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About Global Spectrum
Global Spectrum® (global-spectrum.com) manages more than 115 public assembly facilities around the world. Nearly 20-million people attended more than 11,000 events in Global Spectrum venues last year. Based in Philadelphia, PA, Global Spectrum is part of Comcast-Spectacor, one of the world’s largest sports and entertainment companies.
Comcast-Spectacor also owns the Philadelphia Flyers of the National Hockey League, Ovations Food Services, a food and beverage services provider, New Era Tickets, a full-service ticketing and marketing product for public assembly facilities, Paciolan, the leading provider of venue establishment ticketing, fundraising and marketing technology solutions, Front Row Marketing Services, a commercial rights sales company, and Flyers Skate Zone, a series of community ice skating rinks.

# # #
New Jersey Celebrates “National Girls and Women in Sports Day”

Moorestown women’s lacrosse coach Deanna Knobloch honored

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ (March 6, 2014) -- The NJSIAA (New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association) recently joined the New Jersey Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women for the 28th annual, statewide celebration of “National Girls and Women In Sports Day” at Seton Hall University. The NJSIAA recognized 153 female athletes throughout the state, along with Deanna Knobloch, Moorestown women’s lacrosse coach, who received the 2014 Honor Award. The theme of this year’s event was “Passing the Torch, Blazing the Trail.”

“This year’s event reminds us of the importance of encouraging girls and women to actively participate in competitive sports and always follow their dreams,” says Steve Timko, NJSIAA executive director. “These women will influence and empower future female athletes to continue to strive for excellence throughout their lives.”

Additional sponsors of this event included the New Jersey Association of Intercollegiate Athletics For Women; The Star Ledger; New Jersey Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance; the Garden State Athletic Conference; Montclair State University Department of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Leisure Studies; the Directors of Athletics Association of New Jersey; the National Association for Girls and Women In Sport; and the Women’s Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.

A list of all female athletes recognized at the event is available at http://tinyurl.com/psmx7vr.

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###
For New Jersey’s scholastic athletics fans, it's the most exciting time of the year

Championship tournaments ongoing/upcoming in multiple sports

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ (February 28, 2014) -- It just doesn't get any better than this -- at least, not for fans of New Jersey high school sports.

State champions in bowling (competition for which concluded February 27), ice hockey, wrestling, basketball, fencing, and swimming are being crowned during the next several weeks. Games and matches will be held throughout the state.

"The pure thrill of competition is what attracts so many of our student-athletes to their respective sports, and for many of them this is the most compelling time of year," says Steve Timko, director of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association. "The conclusion of our winter season is when we really pack a huge amount of excitement into a short amount of time."

Specifically, the schedule of upcoming championship tournaments is as follows:

Swimming
- Individual Diving Championships
  - Girls – February 25
  - Boys – February 26
- Individual Boys and Girls Swim Tournament
  - Preliminaries – March 1
  - Finals – March 2

Wrestling
- Regions – February 26, 28, and March 1
- State Seeding – March 3
- Championships at Boardwalk Hall, Atlantic City – March 7-9**

Ice Hockey
- Quarterfinal Round (Round 3) – to be completed by March 3
- Semifinal round – March 5-6
- Finals – March 9 at Prudential Center, Newark

Basketball
- Public
  - Sectional Finals – March 10-11
  - State semifinals – March 12-13
  - Group Finals – March 16
- Non-Public
- Sectional Finals (Non-public B) – March 11-12
- Sectional Finals (Non-public A) – March 12-13
- Group Finals – March 15

- Tournament of Champions
  - Boys Quarterfinals – March 18
  - Girls Quarterfinals – March 19
  - Boys Semifinals – March 20
  - Girls Semifinals – March 21
  - Boys & Girls Finals – March 24 (subject to change)

**Fencing**
- Individual championships -- March 1

Additional details on winter season championships are available at: [http://www.njsiaa.org/events-news-media/event-calendar](http://www.njsiaa.org/events-news-media/event-calendar)

**Note to Editors:** For the 2014 wrestling tournament in Atlantic City, fans won't be permitted to enter Boardwalk Hall with outside foods or beverages of any sort. In addition, it's important to note that Daylight Savings Time begins during the championship weekend, with clocks moving ahead one hour on March 9, at 2 a.m.

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What each student-athlete -- and their family -- should know:  
In Defense of the Multi-Sport Athlete

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ (January 8, 2013) -- Future all-world basketball star Michael Jordan also played football and baseball during high school. Hall of Famer Joe Namath was a standout hoops player at Beaver Falls High and upon graduation received offers from multiple Major League baseball teams ... before accepting a scholarship offer to play football at Alabama. NASCAR driving champion Jimmie Johnson -- the only man ever to captured five consecutive Cup Series championships -- was an excellent swimmer and water polo player during high school.

Yet despite the example of these and many other sports legends, an increasing number of high school student-athletes are specializing, by devoting all their time and energy to a specific sport at the exclusion of all others. In doing so, they often have the support, even encouragement, of coaches and families who perhaps envision a more advanced, developed competitor earning accolades at their current level ... and perhaps increasing their chances of competing at the next.

But, at least when it comes to high school athletes, the concept of specialization is all wrong. And the problem is that focusing on just one sport actually hinders a young person's athletic advancement.

"When you play a given sport -- whether it's football, or softball, or swimming, or whatever -- you use different muscles, tendons, and ligaments," explains Steve Timko, executive director of the NJSIAA (New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association), which was founded in 1918 and numbers 433 accredited public, private, and parochial New Jersey high schools as its members. "But you'll never use all your muscles, tendons, and ligaments, so your body will naturally have weak spots, or gaps. And that's the thing -- when you play a different sport every season, you maximize your strength and your reflexes by training a much greater portion of the whole. You simply cannot do that by playing one game all the time."

Timko’s comments mirror the philosophy of the increasingly popular fitness company CrossFit, Inc., which on its Web site specifically indicates that "Our specialty is not specializing." Instead, CrossFit gyms focus on a wide variety of exercises -- "broad, general, and inclusive" -- to stimulate optimum conditioning.

Another issue with focusing on a lone sport is that doing so tends to block a student-athlete from developing the widespread, diverse relationships that are so beneficial to the development of the individual.
"If a student plays a different sport during each of the three traditional seasons, it stands to reason they'll play alongside a greater number of their peers and learn from a larger number of coaches than if they're a one-sport athlete," says Timko. "Long after anyone is done with competitive athletics, they'll often still be able to tap into those relationships built while playing high school sports. A young person who is limited to focusing on a single sport loses out on making so many potentially valuable personal connections."

In their 2011 book "Foundations of Physical Education, Exercise Science and Sport," authors Deborah Wuest and Charles Bucher maintain that children should play many different sports to experience different challenges and develop different motor skills. Early specialization, they say, prevents youngsters from establishing skills and interests outside of one sport. Likewise, a 2011 article on Livestrong.com noted that a sole focus on one athletic activity can result in burnout and eventually abandonment of that particular sport.

Yet another concern about high school-level athletes specializing is the potential negative impact on development of complex reasoning and problem-solving skills.

"Let's not lose sight of the fact that in athletics -- whatever the sport -- the brain plays a crucial role," notes Larry White, NJSIAA assistant director. "Whether it’s a point guard dribbling up the floor, a quarterback assessing the defense while calling signals, or a short stop fielding a slow grounder with bases loaded, an immense amount of data needs to be analyzed, and decisions need to be made. Every sport presents unique cerebral challenges, so the teenage student-athlete focused on only one sport may lose an awesome opportunity to develop enhanced mental flexibility."

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# # #
BRICK, NJ (Sept. 27, 2013) – The NJSIAA (New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletics Association) -- working in conjunction with New Jersey’s Commissioner of Education, as well as Brick High School and its football opponents -- has created a unique playing opportunity for Anthony Starego, Brick Township’s 19-year-old football player who has multi-symptom autism and related cognitive impairments. Starego has been seeking an additional semester of athletic eligibility, beyond the eight semesters permitted by NJSIAA rules. With agreement from Brick’s coaching staff, and support from all the school’s opponents, he will be allowed to join the Brick team for its remaining games.

Whether or not Starego actually sees on-field action is solely at the discretion of the Brick High School coaching staff.

Because of his significant disabilities, Starego -- in accordance with state laws -- will likely be enrolled in the high school until he’s 21. But according to the NJSIAA, New Jersey’s governing body for high school sports, the Commissioner of Education, and the federal courts, Starego has already participated in his allotted four years. The specific NJSIAA rule allows student-athletes to compete during eight-consecutive-semesters, or four years, until the age of 19. The rule is aimed, in part, at preventing “redshirting” -- a practice common in college athletics that involves sitting out for a full year to mature and gain competitive advantage.

Starego -- who first attracted statewide attention in 2012, when he booted a dramatic, 22-yard field goal in the final minute of play to give his team an upset victory -- was not redshirted, and was seeking an extra year of eligibility to complement his extended high school education. During the 2013 season, Starego has been allowed to practice with his team.

“Anthony is a special young man with exceptional skills and presents a unique set of circumstances,” said Steve Timko, NJSIAA executive director. “The federal court clearly established that there’s been no violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), so the NJSIAA is under no obligation to provide him with additional playing time. In addition, our eight-semester and age 19 rules remain firmly in place. But, given the double digit increase in statewide classification rates, the association needs to address the needs of our student athletes and their families.”

According to Steve Goodell, NJSIAA legal counsel, once the federal court definitively affirmed the association’s position regarding the ADA, it seemed appropriate to resolve the matter promptly, without excessive, additional debate. And, reaching this solution now allows all parties to avoid additional litigation related to potential appeals.
"We're a member-driven organization, so before making any decision, we decided to consult with those member schools who are Brick's football opponents," Timko explained. "And without exception, they were agreeable to letting Anthony take the field."

“We have nothing but profound thanks to the association for creating this opportunity," said the Starego family's attorney, Gary S. Mayerson, founding partner of New York City-based Mayerson & Associates. "We are just glad that Anthony has an opportunity to play."

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###
NJSIAA proposal could have New Jersey’s public high school football teams contesting group-level state championships by 2014

All member schools slated to cast deciding ballots in December

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ (September 24, 2013) -- A dramatic change could be coming to high school football in New Jersey. At a recent executive session, the NJSIAA (New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association) unveiled specifics of a proposal to allow the 308 teams representing its public high school members to compete for overall group state championships.

In December, all association member schools will have the opportunity to vote on amending the NJSIAA constitution to remove a prohibition against playoffs that would crown public school group champions. If this vote is successful -- a two-thirds majority is required -- the association’s football committee would then be charged with implementing the new playoff format for the 2014 season.

The NJSIAA currently conducts an annual football playoff that culminates with teams capturing group sectional championships. This structure is somewhat unusual, in that 49 of the 51 state athletic associations now crown group champions.

"Here in New Jersey, we have a reputation for being trend-setters across the spectrum of interscholastic sports," observed Steve Timko, NJSIAA executive director. "In fact, we have more championship tournaments than any other state. But with football playoffs, we’re out of sync with what has become the national norm of playing for group-wide championships. And that's why we've proposed this change."

The effort to reform the football playoff format to crown group state champions was an association member-driven initiative led by Big North Conference executive director Denis Nelson, the athletic director at River Dell Regional High School.

Besides football, all other NJSIAA sports -- fall, winter, and spring -- feature a playoff structure ending with a group-level champion or the equivalent. In addition, football teams representing non-public school NJSIAA member school -- of which there are currently 38 -- have played out to a group state champion since 1993.

Under the proposed new structure, all public school teams would play a nine-game schedule in 2014, beginning on Friday, September 5 and Saturday, September 6. Final regular season games would be played on October 31 and November 1, with determinations on playoff participation and seeding taking place on "Selection Sunday," November 2.
Playoff rounds would then be played on November 7 and 8 and on November 14 and 15, with all sectional finals contested on November 21 and November 22. Thanksgiving weekend games -- not part of the playoff structure -- would be played on November 27, 28, and 29.

The playoffs would resume December 5 and 6 with 20 state group semi-final games being played at neutral sites. Finals, to determine the five group state champions, would be played -- again at neutral sites -- on December 12 and 13.

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###
Final Standings for 10th annual NJSIAA ShopRite Cup

Top high school sports programs of 2012-13 recognized for championship play

Schools from Middlesex, Camden, Gloucester, Essex, Monmouth, and Morris County Honored

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ (August 8, 2013) – This year’s final -- and tenth annual -- ShopRite Cup standings have been issued by the NJSIAA (New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association). Sponsored by ShopRite and the NJSIAA, the ShopRite Cup recognizes the top high school sports program in each of New Jersey's six group classifications.

Throughout the 2012-2013 school year, athletic programs accumulated points based on performance in championship play in the 32 NJSIAA-sanctioned sports. Schools also received three additional points per season whenever none of their student-athletes or coaches were disqualified during that season.

At the conclusion of the fall, winter, and spring athletic seasons, the six schools with the most points in their respective categories received the 2012-2013 ShopRite Cup. The final point standings are as follows:

- Group I: Metuchen High School (Middlesex County) – 59 points
- Group II: Haddonfield Memorial High School (Camden County) – 55 points
- Group III: Kingsway Regional High School (Gloucester County) – 71 points
- Group IV: Millburn High School (Essex County) – 56 points
- Non-public Group A: Christian Brothers Academy (Monmouth County) – 170 points*
- Non-public Group B: Villa Walsh High School (Morris County) – 79 points*

*Placement points doubled – single gender school

“In its tenth consecutive year, the race for the ShopRite Cup has become as exciting a competition as there is in high school sports,” says Steve Timko, NJSIAA executive director. “The Cup is a unique honor, because it recognizes the finest high school athletic programs in the state for collective effort. We congratulate this year’s six champions on another outstanding year.”

The full, updated 2012-2013 final standings can be found on the NJSIAA Web site, at http://www.njsiaa.org/NJSIAA/13ShopRiteCupFinal.pdf

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# # #
High school-level athletics participation rises 6% in past two years, NJSIAA reports

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ (July 29, 2013) – The New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA) is reporting that participation in high school athletics has increased by 6 percent during the past two school years. The increase boosted the total number of student-athletes at association member schools from 255,892 in 2010-2011 to 270,123 in 2012-2013.

With 434 public and non-public member high schools in New Jersey offering three athletic seasons and a total of 32 different boys and girls sports -- along with many schools fielding teams at the varsity, junior varsity, and freshman levels -- this trend of increased participation has every opportunity of continuing.

"The involvement of more schools and the expansion of athletic programs is creating greater opportunity for student-athletes to participate in a variety of sports," explains Steve Timko, NJSIAA executive director. "The opportunity to join a team provides multiple benefits to young people, including offering a positive outlet for development of skills beyond the classroom."

While the total number of participants has increased in many sports, the three that enjoyed the greatest upswing in the past two years are boys basketball, girls volleyball and indoor track for both boys and girls.

From 2010-2011 to 2012-2013, four additional schools established boys basketball programs, and total numbers skyrocketed from 12,741 student-athletes to 14,193 -- an 11 percent spike. Girls volleyball participation expanded with 1,637 new participants between the 2010-2011 and 2012-2013 school years, an incredible 25 percent increase. As for indoor track, including boys and girls, it has added nearly 2,700 new participants.

"These numbers indicate an extensive, consistent expansion of the high school-based model of sports participation," Timko adds. "This is the avenue clearly being chosen by the vast majority of student-athletes and their parents, and it's a credit to those educators who proactively provide additional athletic opportunities for New Jersey's young people."

Since the 2010-2011 school year, less traditionally popular athletic opportunities have gained momentum. As an example, only three high school girls played football in New Jersey two years ago, while in 2012-2013, that number climbed to 21 participants.

The nation's eighth largest state interscholastic athletic association, the NJSIAA offers more championship tournaments than does any other state association. It was the first association in the nation to conduct steroid testing, and the first to institute a comprehensive concussion program.

In addition, the NJSIAA oversees the activities of approximately 25,000 coaches and 10,000 officials.
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