

NJSCA
Hall of Fame

CLASS OF 2025



JOHN J. BAUER, SR.*

Randolph HS

Football (25 Years) / 193-42-3

- 25 Consecutive Winning Seasons from 1966 to 1990.
- Finished with a .821 winning percentage.
- 7 State Championships & 16 Conference Championships.
- Named the #1 Team in NJ in 1990.
- Star-Ledger Coach of the Year.
- 54 consecutive wins without a tie & 59 consecutive wins without a loss.

**Posthumous Award*



CHRISTOPHER BEAGAN

Sayreville War Memorial HS & Monroe Twp HS

Football (15 Years) / 90-64

Wrestling (3 Years)

Football

- At Sayreville, won two Group State Championships & the inaugural 2018 South/Central Bowl as HC. As Asst Coach, won the 1997 NJSIAA CJ Group III State Championship & were 5-time division champions.
- His 2009 Monroe team was the Central Jersey Group III State Champions, the first football state championship in the school's history & finished as the #10 ranked team in NJ (#5 public school).
- Coached in the NJ vs. Northeast All-Star game and named USA Today, NJ.com, and Marine Corps. Semper Fidelis Coach of the Year.

Wrestling

- 2003 District 20 COY & 2004 White Division COY.
- 2005 Team set school record for most dual meet wins & district champs in a single season.

Career Highlights:

Winning Monroe's 1st ever Football State Championship w/ a very special group of young men, winning the 2016 State Championship at Rutgers Stadium with my alma mater, and winning the inaugural (South/Central) Bowl game at Giants Stadium in 2018. Go Big Blue!!



TOSCA BLANDFORD BYNOE

Willingboro HS

Cross Country, Winter & Outdoor Track (19 Years)

- Her teams won 11 state championship titles, 6 state sectional titles, and 5 group titles.
- Coached athletes to three state records (indoor 4x4 - 3:47 in 2002 and 3:45 in 2003, and the 400 in 2003).
- Had many All-State and All-South Jersey athletes who went on to have successful track and field careers at the collegiate level.
- Named 2004 COA South Jersey COY and inducted into the South Jersey Coaches HOF.

Career Highlight:

The 2002 pursuit and achievement of breaking the State indoor record for the 4x400 meter relay with a team of underclassmen and lowering the record the following year.

JAMES BOYLE III, MA, ATC

Hillside HS

Athletic Trainer



- 15+ years as a Certified Athletic Trainer.
- Head Certified Athletic Trainer & Sports Medicine Teacher, Hillside High School (2008–Present).
- Founder, Hillside High School Athletic Trainer Club; established a senior scholarship.
- Adjunct Professor & Clinical Preceptor, Kean University.
- Clinical Preceptor, Seton Hall University.
- Committee Member and Head Athletic Trainer, Phil Simms North–South All-Star Football Game.
- Presenter, National Athletic Trainers' Association.
- Published author, Athletic Trainers' Society of NJ.
- Recipient, Iota Tau Alpha National Council Award for excellence & service in athletic training education.

Career Highlight:

In 2019, our starting quarterback suffered a devastating hip dislocation & fracture, & was unable to walk. Over the next 8 weeks, we committed to a structured, progressive rehabilitation plan built on patience, trust, & constant communication. Together, we worked through physical setbacks & mental doubt, preparing if the opportunity ever came to return the right way. That opportunity arrived in the Grp 2 South Sectional Final. Late in the 4th quarter, this athlete was called upon to step back onto the field. In that moment, 8 weeks of rehabilitation, preparation, & belief came full circle. He entered the game & threw the game-winning touchdown, securing a 14–10 victory & a sectional championship for his team. Watching an athlete go from being unable to walk to leading his team in the most critical moment of the season was a powerful reminder of why I do this work.



TODD BRIGGS

Freehold Township High School

Boys Soccer (10 Years/134-61-15) / Girls XC (10 Years)
B/G Winter Track (17 Years) / Outdoor Track (9 Years)

- Boys Soccer -2 conference championships, 2 Central Gr 4 sectional titles, & 2 players drafted by Major League Soccer (MLS).
- XC - 2 county championships, 3 conference championships, 2 state sectional titles, & 2 Group 4 State Championships. 2022 Team placed as high as 3rd place at MOC.
- Track & Field - 5 county relay championships, 6 county championships, 2 conference championships, & 6 state sectional championships.
- 2014 New Balance Nationals 4x800 meter relay National Champions.

Career Highlight:

Two of my daughters were on my XC team. Pressure was on to win back to back Group Championships. At the group meet, my oldest Sophia fell. My younger daughter Natalie saw & realized she'd have to replace Sophia for the team to win. Sophia got up & finished the race where she was supposed to be, in front of her younger sister - she wasn't letting her beat her. I witnessed my own two children, also my team members, stare adversity in the face & persevere & they did it together.



TRACY BURKHART

Washington Township HS
Softball (21 Years) / 353-129

- 8 Conference Championships, 6 Group 4 Championships & 3 State Championships.
- 2015 Team was 31-1. Ranked #1 in the state and ranked #8 in the country; considered the best softball team in the school's history.
- Coach of the Year: 2013 and 2021.
- Inducted into the SJGSA Hall of Fame.

Career Highlight:

Shortly after my mother passed away, we were playing a game & had been trailing the whole time. It was cloudy all day, almost matching how I felt inside. Then, in the 7th inning, the clouds broke, the sun came shining through, & our girls rallied to score 4 runs, winning the game 4-2. In that moment, it felt like a sign-a little light breaking through the darkness, reminding me my mom was still with me somehow. That win led us to the South Jersey Group 4 game, eventually winning the 2002 state championship.

SHELLY DEARDEN

Ewing HS

Basketball (31 Years) and Girls Soccer (7 Years)



- Girls Soccer: 7 CVC league titles, 1 Mercer County title, 4 NJSIAA sectionals & 1 state championship.
- G Basketball: 5 league titles, 3 county titles, 4 NJSIAA sectionals, & 1 state championship title. Coached nine 1,000 point scorers.
- B Basketball: Was the only woman coaching boys in NJ, & one of a handful nationally. Coached four 1,000 point scorers, teams amassed 9 league titles, 1 county title, 6 NJSIAA sectionals & 1 state title.
- Became the only coach in country to win 3 State Championships in 3 different sports. First woman to win a state title in both girls' & boys' basketball.
- Named NJSIAA COY twice, Mercer County COY on multiple occasions by multiple outlets, was a HOF inductee 7 times, and many more accolades including national recognition.
- Is founder of many community athletic programs such as Mercer "33" Girls Soccer Awards Banquet & the girls basketball summer league at Moody Park in Ewing.

STEPHEN FENTON

Madison / Jonathan Dayton / Bloomfield / N. Plainfield

G Volleyball (44 Years) / Boys Volleyball (3 Years)

Career Record: 616-572



- At Bloomfield HS, girls won the 1998 Essex County Championship & Stephen named Essex County COY. Also were the 1999 Grp 4 State Champions & 3-time conference winners.
- At Madison HS - won Group 1 South Sectional Championship 4 times, were 2-time state finalists, reached the semis 4 times and sectional finals twice.
- 2013 Morris County COY & Team of the Year.
- 10 conference championships @ Madison HS.

Career Highlights:

1980 - My first win @ Jonathon Dayton Reg HS because my Dad was present.

1999 - State Group 4 Championship over Ridgewood.

2010 & 2013 - State Semi Final Victories over Secaucus & River Dell HS.



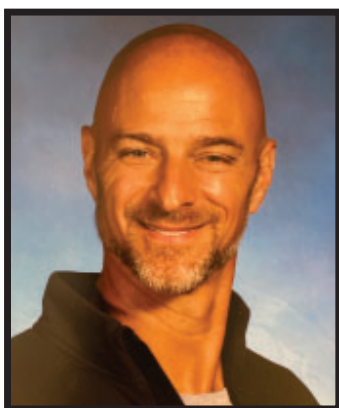
RICHARD HORAN

Audubon HS / Gloucester Catholic HS
Baseball (33 Years as Head Coach - 46 Years in total)
Career Record: 631-248-3

- 14 Colonial Conference Championships (1992, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2017, 2018, 2022 and 2023).
- 10 Group I or Group II Championships (1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2017).
- 7 State Championships (1994, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2011 and 2012).

Career Highlights:

Have had the pleasure of coaching at my Alma Mater for the last 33 years and winning 7 state championships.



DAVID LESHNOWER

Mountain Lakes HS
B/G Swimming (33 Years) / Career Record: 535-223
Girls Lacrosse (Freshman & JV) - 17 Seasons
B Freshmen Lacrosse-6 Seasons / Freshman Football-5 Seasons

- B/G Swimming - 70.6% winning percentage.
- 12 NJSIAA state titles (7 Boys & 5 Girls).
- 33 NJSIAA sectional titles (14 Boys & 19 Girls).
- All-Time state consecutive titles (Boys (5) T-8th Place & Girls (3) T-11th Place) & All-Time state titles (Boys 8th Place (contributed 7 of 12 titles) & Girls T-7th (contributed 5 of 6 titles)).
- NJSIAA state record holders in the Boys 2005 200-Freestyle Relay (1:26.71) & Boys 100 Butterfly.
- First public school team to win 9 straight relay titles at the NJSIAA Meet of Champions [2005-2007].
- 23 NISCA High School All-Americans.
- Named 2006 NFHS Sectional Swimming COY & National Finalist and Star Ledger HS State COY in 1995 & 2006.

Career Highlights:

1- The seasons I shared the pool deck with my own children, in pursuit of their dreams, with their teammates. 2- One of our swimmers had become psychologically & physically challenged when competing in her best event (the 100 Breaststroke). We collaborated on a plan to help her navigate these challenges by holding her out of the event for the majority of the season, and monitored her progress & confidence levels instead. At the State Final in 2017, that same swimmer, was inserted back into the 100 breaststroke when the outcome of the championship would determine the 2017 State Team Championship. This swimmer earned first place, set a school record time, and helped the team win a second straight (of 3) Public C Championship.

BILL MANZO

Ramapo HS

Boys and Girls Track & Field (20 Years - 19 as Head Coach)



- 6 NBIL/Big North Freedom Championships, 5 Bergen County Championships, 2025 Bergen County Relays Champions, 2 spring & 4 winter sectional titles & 2 state group championships.
- Named Big North Conference COY 4 times, Bergen County COY Year 3 times, North Jersey COY 3 times & the State COY in 2013.
- Ramapo track has produced numerous 1st team All-League, All-County, All-State, & All-American athletes. Many continued on to help their teams to conference championships, earned All-Conference & All-American honors, and medals in international competition for Team USA.
- Founded youth track & field camp w/ over 1600 kids in the program since the first year.

Career Highlight:

Seeing his team grow in the face of tragedy after the passing of distance runner Ben Landel, from a rare, aggressive cancer. Ben's courage & efforts to keep his family, teammates & coaches at ease was one of the greatest displays of strength, fortitude, & compassion I've ever witnessed. Ben referred to the "track family" often during his battle & was not only part of everything we did then, but still part of what we do now. The team rallied to win several high level events & medals & broke several school records by channeling their energy in a positive way.

GLENN MERKLE

Woodstown HS

Boys Soccer (8 Years) / 69- 51-16

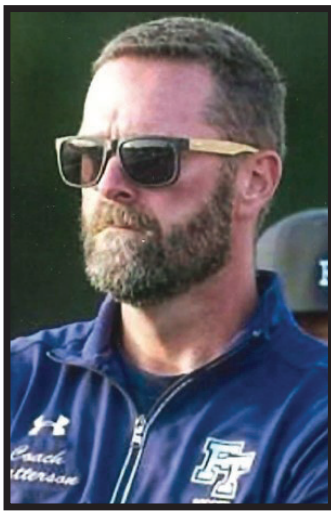
Asst Coach - Baseball (15 Years) / B Basketball (6 Years)



- 3 Boys Soccer Championships.
- Town's track & field facility named in his honor.
- Member of DAANJ HOF, South Jersey Coaches Association HOF, & Salem County Sports HOF.
- Received President's Award in 2020 for "Service & Commitment".
- Served as NJSIAA South Jersey Group II boys' basketball sectional rep for 25+ years, National HS Athletic Coaches Assoc at-large rep, & was Director of Athletics for almost 30 years.

Career Highlight:

Started the first high school soccer program in Salem County with players who never played soccer at any level. Coached them to not only a championship team but a team that established themselves. Also, after I had a surgery, the entire team came over to watch the game on video with me. Two days later, our local volunteer EMS arrived in an ambulance to take me to the game as the community was now fully involved in our newest sport.



DAVE PATTERSON

Freehold Township HS
Girls Soccer (16 Years) / 252- 64-27

- 9 Shore Conference A-North Division Championships, 4 Shore Conference Championships, 6 Central Jersey Group 4 Championships and 4 Group 4 Championships.
- Twice named Monmouth County Coach of the Year, Central Jersey Coach of the Year and NJ Coach of the Year.
- Coached All-American Game 2023.
- Coached 47 college soccer players.

Career Highlights:

Winning the Shore Conference Championship for the 1st time in 2011 was the school's first major championship. In 2015, we won our first state sectional championship against a team that had our number for many years. From 2020-2024, we won approximately 12 championships & were ranked very high in the state & nation consistently. Then this year, the girls found a way to win a sectional championship beating 3 teams that were having incredible seasons. Last, being selected to be a coach in the 2023 All-American game, coaching 2 of my players.



CLINT "CAP" PAZDERA

New Providence HS
Girls Basketball (20 Years) / 418-131
Varsity Golf Head & Assistant Coach (12 Years)
Assistant Coach for Varsity B Soccer (5 Years)
V Softball (2 years) / B Varsity Basketball (3 Years)
Career Record (all sports): 418-131

- Coached varsity teams to 14 division/conference championships, 7 sectional state titles, 3 Union County Tournament Championships (which were the 13th, 14th and 15th UCT championships in school history in all sports), 5 group championships, 4 Group 1 State Championships & 1 Group 2 State Championship in 2023.
- 2-time Star Ledger/NJ.com State Coach of the Year, 4-time Star Ledger/NJ.com Coach of the Year (Union County), 3-time Courier News Coach of the Year & Union County Interscholastic Conference Coach of the Year, & 2015-2016 NFHS Sectional Coach of the Year.

Career Highlight:

We were the underdog in a sectional semifinal game, playing a team whose best player needed 17 points to score her 1000th. This player tended to put her head down on drives to the basket & pick up quick cheap fouls. In practices, we practiced this. Early in the 4th quarter, we were down 10 points. Their best player was on, but playing with 4 fouls. Next possession, she drove to the basket. Her defender, in perfect form, took a charge...giving their best player the rest of the night off. Game ended five minutes, 2 seconds later with us scoring a wide open buzzer beating basket for the win!



CARYN SCHANSTINE

Northern Highlands Regional HS
Girls Volleyball: 25 Years (23 V; 2 JV) / 375-203
Varsity Assistant Softball: 20 Years

- NJSIAA G3 State Champions in 2008 & N1G3 Section Champions in 2023.
- Big North Conference Freedom Division Co-League Champions twice (2019 & 2023) & League Champions during 2021 Covid season.
- Bergen County Coach of the Year 2008.
- NJSIAA Sports Award for Volleyball 2017.
- BNC Freedom Division Coach of the Year 3 times.
- Member of Bergen Cty Volleyball Committee & NJSIAA State Tournament Selection Committee.

Career Highlight:

Winning the state championship in 2008 was a remarkable experience, especially since the NJSIAA tournament was an entire group championship and was not separated into sections.



VINNY SMITH

Irvington HS
Girls Basketball / 102-11
Football at Snyder HS

- 2 NJSIAA Group 4 Championships.
- 3 NJSIAA Group 4 Sectional Titles.
- 2 Essex County Championships and 2-time Tournament Runner-ups.
- 3 Watchung Conference Championships.
- Named Coach of the Year.
- In football, team made it to the Group 4 Finals.

Career Highlight:

Winning the 1st NJSIAA Group 4 Championship in women's Basketball for Irvington HS.

CHRIS TAFELSKI

Westfield HS



Cross Country (14 Years Head; 8 Years Assistant)
Winter Track & Field (14 Years Head; 9 Years Assistant)
Spring Track & Field (13 Years Head; 8 Years Assistant)

- Cross-Country: 8x Union County Champions, 7x N2G4 Sectional Champions, 2023 Grp 4 State Champions & Nike Cross Nationals Qualifiers.
- Winter Track & Field: 3x Union County Champions,
- 4x N2G4 Sectional Champions, 3x Grp 4 State Champions, 3 Meet of Champions winners, New Balance 9X Nationals All-American Relays & 2x Nationals Champions.
- Spring Track & Field: 3x North 2 Grp 4 Sectional Champions, 2024 Grp 4 State Champions, 5x New Balance Nationals All-American Relays, 2024 New Balance Nationals Champions (4x800 Relay).
- NJ State Record, Distance Medley Relay 9:50.11.
- Named USTFCCA NJ Coach of the Year for Cross Country and Spring Track.

Career Highlights:

In 2023, our 5-man average at Holmdel Park was 16:01, #3 All-Time & the fastest ever by a public school. We placed 2nd at the Nike Northeast Regional meet to qualify for Nike Cross Nationals. Our Sprint Medley Relay team won New Balance Nationals Indoors in 2022. Our 4x800 Relay teams won New Balance Nationals Indoors & Outdoors in 2024, & our Distance Medley Relay set the state record of 9:50.11.

JOHN THOMPSON

Delbarton School

Tennis (730-235) / 38 Years



- Won the following championships: Episcopal Academy Doubles Tournament, Westfield Invitation, Mercersburg Doubles Only Tournament (DOT).
- State Tournament of Champions - Winners in 2008 & State Finalists 3 times.
- 28 Conference & 26 Morris County Championships.
- Started the Bryan Bennett Tournament at Delbarton School. His teams won it in 1994 & 2014.
- Ran Morris County Tournament for several years & serves on the NJSIAA State Seeding Committee.
- Daily Record, Conference & Star-Ledger COY.

Career Highlight:

Beating Westfield in the Tournament of Champions Finals in 2008. No one gave us a chance to win but our team upset them in the finals 3-2. The match came down to First Singles with our player Henry Steer prevailing in three sets to clinch the victory. It really sank in when the NJSIAA director told us at the trophy ceremony that out of 464 high schools you are the only team left standing.

NJICA/NJSCA Hall of Fame Members

1964 - 2025

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scan the QR code below.**



<https://www.njsiaa.org/coaches/njsca-awards>

**"A good coach will make his players see what they can be
rather than what they are."**

- Ara Parseghian, College Football Coach