

MINNESOTA INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES

MN IA AAA

ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Emmett Keenan, President
St. Cloud Cathedral



Greetings:

As I write this, I am in the middle of three days of working at the State Soccer Tournament. Many years ago, I was presented with the opportunity to get involved with this tournament, and I am certainly glad that I said yes. Starting as an assistant tournament manager for the two years we played outdoors at St. Cloud State, I am fortunate to have served as the tournament manager since we moved to US Bank Stadium in 2016.

My purpose for telling you about this is not to brag about my responsibilities, but rather to encourage you to become involved when and where you can. Someday, you will be asked to help at a section or state event. It could be running a clock, acting as a team host, helping with media, etc. If you can, please say yes.. My involvement with state tournaments started with doing PA at state baseball games in St. Cloud nearly 30 years ago. Who knows where yours will start?

While taking some time away from my "A" job, being involved in the management of section and state tournaments has multiplied my relationships in our business exponentially. I have met peers from all corners of the state and learned much in these interactions that have made me (hopefully) a better day-to-day administrator. I have also had a front row seat to countless accomplishments and

triumphs of many student-athletes from around this great state.

You might not even have to wait to get asked. If there is a tournament that you think you might want to help with, I encourage you to reach out to the MSHSL staff person involved and offer to help. They always have needs pop up, and will remember that you added your name to the list.

Take the step today to get involved where you can, when you can. You will never regret it.





GRANITE RIDGE CONFERENCE

By Emmett Keenan, President
St. Cloud Cathedral



The Granite Ridge Conference was formed in the 2011-2012 school year.. Schools from three different conferences whose needs were changing and evolving at the time, came together to the benefit of all. We had the opportunity to build a conference from the ground up and take the best practices of several conferences and adapt them to create a groundwork for our new alliance.



We offer conference championships in Volleyball, Girls and Boys Soccer, Girls and Boys Cross-Country, Girls and Boys Tennis, Girls Swim and Dive, Girls and Boys Basketball, Dance Team, Wrestling, Baseball, Softball, Girls and Boys Golf, and Girls and Boys Track and Field. We believe we offer one of the most competitive conferences in the state with our member schools regularly competing for section and state titles. We offer scheduling opportunities for our member schools at all levels, grades 7-12 as well as All-Conference Awards and Player of the Year awards.

We also offer Fine Arts Championships in Speech and Knowledge Bowl as well as sponsoring Visual Arts and Honor Band and Choir festivals.

Our current membership is Albany, Foley, Little Falls, Milaca, Mora, Pequot Lakes, Pierz and St. Cloud Cathedral. Mora will be leaving after this year to join the Great River Conference. We are actively pursuing possible additions to our conference.



BLOOM WHERE YOU ARE PLANTED



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

By Dan Johnson, Executive Director

When I was a young coach, trying to make my way to what I thought to be bigger and better positions, a colleague/friend of mine who was an elementary school teacher told me on several occasions to "bloom where you are planted". I just assumed that meant that I was working in the best I could probably achieve and I should be happy with that. I was wrong. Way wrong.

We all have those days where the job is a little tougher than it was the day before. We also have those days where we have a really good meeting with a coach or some students, or we have a great event and a fun atmosphere. It is that "tougher" day that we have a tendency to really grind on and, in the process, make ourselves a bit crazy. We overthink it, we try to anticipate where the next shoe drops, and we are pretty certain there will be fallout and drama somewhere in the near future.

If we can step back from it all and find a way to grow within the difficult times, we will not only bloom where we are planted, but we will flourish. I have told coaches and student/athletes for many years that "if you live and die with every game, you do a whole lot of dying". It is important for us, as athletic administrators, to understand that sometimes we didn't have our A-game. Sometimes we may have been less than what we could have been. Nothing terrible that we can't get over, just need to make

sure we are ready to do the job...to bloom. Not just to survive and make it to the next day, but to really grow despite the circumstances and thrive.

My wish for each of you as we head toward the fall tournaments and the start of the winter seasons is to allow yourself some room to grow, to blossom, and to enjoy each day. The job will be as fun as you make it...for your students, parents, coaches...and for yourself!





WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

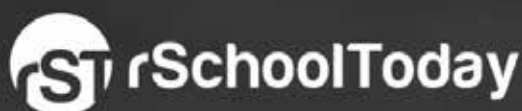


For many Minnesota ADs, the only time they physically see activity involving the MNIAAA is when we have the state conference. As with all of you, even when it seems that, on the surface, there isn't much going on...there's always more than meets the eye. This is a little summary of what has been happening since last March...

- After the conference, the MNIAAA Board met to discuss highs, lows, and areas that can be improved. The board takes the time to review all of the feedback from the participants and the vendors and uses that in the planning process.
- In June, Dan, Ken, and Brad O'Donnell, St. Clair (NIAAA Liaison) traveled to the Section V meeting in Omaha. The President usually also goes, but he was unavailable...working state baseball. Tony Fisher, Minneapolis, was also in Omaha. Tony is serving a term on the NIAAA Board of Directors. Much discussion about what is working within the various states takes place. Also at this event, both Minnesota scholarship winners were selected as the Section V scholarship winners.
- (Section V includes Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri. For some reason, we jump over Iowa.)
- In July, Dan attended the NEDC conference (for Executive Directors) in Traverse City, Michigan. This is an opportunity for EDs from around the country to have discussions on what's working and what challenges may be forthcoming.
- Through the rest of June and July, the New AD Workshop was put together. This took place over two days in St. Cloud. We had 48 participants, down a couple from the 52 of the previous year. Gio Jenkins, Washburn did a great job reviewing the challenges of being a new AD. All participants took LTC 501 and also heard from a superintendent, a Region Secretary, and the members of the MNIAAA Board. The directors of the MSHSL spent several hours with them on the first day.
- Three newsletters are produced per year. One was last spring after the conference and this is the first of this year. The third one will be out in February.

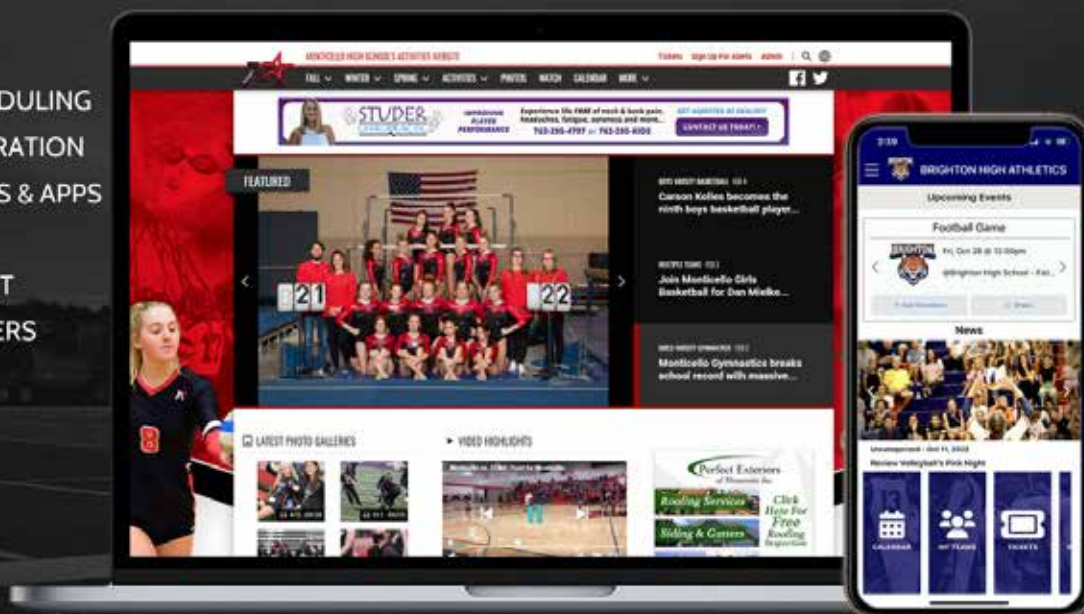


- Beginning soon after the New AD conference, planning was begun and is still ongoing for the state conference. Again, we are using feedback from last year as we keep trying to offer our members the best possible opportunity to improve at what you do.
- At the end of October, we will have our annual fall Region Rep meeting.
- The board is working on a variety of things and has met and will continue to meet as they bring ideas forward to the membership.



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Words from a **PAST PRESIDENT**

**By Jeff Boran, President
Waterville-Elysian-Morristown**



Oh the people you meet!

Serving on the MNIAAA Executive Board for nearly the past 4 years has been a privilege and a blessing, if for no other reason than the people you meet and get to know! Experienced and new AD's I have said this before, but it is worth repeating, get involved in some way with the MNIAAA/NIAAA, whether it is with your region as a rep or on an Advisory Committee within your Region. The MNIAAA has many ways to be involved including as staff members for LTI courses etc. The NIAAA and Section 5 also provide opportunities to get involved.

What has amazed me, being fortunate enough with my opportunity to serve, is the people you meet not just within our state but within the midwest region and the nation. The MNIAAA staff (Dan Johnson & Ken Hubert) and the present Executive Board (Emmett Keenan - St. Cloud Cathedral, Will Short - Simley, Bill Quan - Osseo, Rob Nielsen - Detroit Lakes & Meghan Potter - Wayzata) are working hard and are dedicated to the continued excellence of the MNIAAA. Please thank those individuals!!

A shout out to Les Zellmann - St. James (Retired!) and Brad O'Donnell - St. Clair for their work on LTI courses. If interested in becoming an instructor let them know.

I would also like to shout out to some others I have been privileged to get to know and serve alongside. Matt Mattson - Champlin Park, Brent Schimek - Deer River, Mark Kuisle - Rochester Century, Jill Johnson - formerly Waconia, Guillaume Paek - formerly Burnsville, Kenny Maxey Minneapolis, and of course our retired Executive Secretary, Mike Beck - St. Michael- Albertville. The past 4 years have been rocky to say the least with a lot of changes and finding the new normal. These people are why the MNIAAA continues to be a solid organization supporting Activities Administrators and Student Opportunities. Encourage any of your colleagues in your area to join if they have not already. They will be members of an excellent educational association.

Go for it and take an opportunity to attend an NADC (Orlando in Dec. 2023, Austin TX in 2024), and of course our own MNIAAA State Conference March 26-28 and find a way to get involved! Contact any Board member if you feel you have something to give by becoming more involved in the State Conference! There are lots of opportunities to serve as moderators and/or lead sessions, but most of all an opportunity to mingle and get to know those who do the same things as you do!

Cheers to a great 2023-2024 Year!



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AWARDS AND HONORS

By Rob Nielsen, Detroit Lakes



MNIAAA Members it is the time of year to think about submitting deserving candidates for the spring of 2024 MNIAAA Awards and Honors.

The MNIAAA honors its members and other individuals connected with Minnesota co-curricular programs who have distinguished themselves or have otherwise made significant contributions to Minnesota High School Athletics.

Please take time to nominate your peers, alumni, and event workers who deserve to be recognized for their outstanding service to the students of Minnesota, their communities and the MNIAAA.

The five major categories for MNIAAA Awards are:

- **Activities Administrators of the Year** - Activities Administrators from each MSHSL administrative region are honored with an overall Activities Administrator of the year selected from these candidates for Class A and Class AA. You should be receiving requests for nominations from your MNIAAA Region Representative this fall.
- **Distinguished Alumni** - Awarded annually to up to five individuals. Honorees must have graduated from a Minnesota high school where they participated in extra-curricular activities and must have distinguished themselves in their chosen field. Nominate Distinguished Alumni Here Names may also be submitted by the membership through the region representatives at the fall meeting. The Executive Committee will make the final selections and consideration should be given to geographic areas of Minnesota.
- **Distinguished Service** - Awarded annually to deserving individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the local school athletic program. To be considered, submit the form below along with three letters of nomination to Keith Cornell, Committee Chair, keithc@mystma.org Distinguished Service Submission Form

MNIAAA AWARD VIDEOS ON



- **State Award of Merit** - It is an award presented by the state to an MNIAAA member who demonstrates outstanding leadership and meritorious service and achievement in the vocation of interscholastic administration. State Award of Merit Nomination Form
- **Hall of Fame** - Recognizes outstanding MNIAAA members who have made significant contributions to Minnesota High School athletics, co-curricular activities and their role in the education of the students we serve. Members who have exhibited outstanding achievements and contributions throughout their career will be considered if they meet the following criteria.
- Current or past member of the MNIAAA
- Must have made significant contributions to high school athletics in Minnesota.



[Click here to go to ALL of the online Award Nomination Forms page on MNIAAA.org](https://www.mniaaa.org)

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INTRODUCING MEGHAN POTTER

MNIAAA FEMALE REPRESENTATIVE



Introducing Meghan Potter, MNIAAA Board Member – Female Rep

This past summer, Jill Johnson stepped down from her position as AD at Waconia High School. At the same time, she resigned her MNIAAA role as the elected Female Rep on the Board of Directors. Following the MNIAAA constitution's process for filling an open board position, the board opened the position to those who were eligible. From these candidates, Meghan Potter of Wayzata was chosen by the board to take on this leadership position. The following is Meghan's introduction to all who do not yet know her. Welcome, Meghan!

* * * * *

Earlier this fall, I was meeting with a student who was working on a project for her Introduction to Education class, and before we got started, she asked me as a side note about how I ended up in my role as an athletic administrator. I've been asked that question before, but I always love being able to share my route to becoming an AD especially to young women who are curious about the profession. I believe I was meant to be an AD, so maybe unlike some people who fell into their profession or tried it for something new, I have always kept my eye on the prize. While some may not think this job is the jackpot, to me, there's no better opportunity to be able to work with young adults and watch them excel in things well above my talent level.

My deep-rooted passion for sports and activities, developed through my own participation as an athlete. This passion fuels my dedication to create meaningful experiences for all student-athletes. Growing up in Hibbing, I played volleyball, basketball, and softball. I graduated in 1999, and went on to play softball at NDSU, winning a Division II National Championship my freshman year. After graduating with a double major in English Education and Mass Communications, I got my first teaching job at Jordan High School in Jordan, MN. As a first year teacher, I did anything and everything asked of me from being the National Honor Society Advisor to teaching an Intro to Theater class. I received my Master of Education in Sports Management from the University of Minnesota and my educational administration and leadership from St. Cloud State University. I then taught middle school at Delano and high school at Prior Lake all while coaching various sports at both places. I also took three years off from teaching to work in athletics at the University of Minnesota with the hope that I could use the experience to help me become a high school AD one day.

All of that paid off when fate led me back up north to Hibbing where I was the Community Education Director for one year and the Activities Director for eight. In 2021, my family and I made the move back down to the Metro when I became the Director of Athletics and Activities at Wayzata High School.

Now in my 11th year as an AD, I can look back on all of my life experiences and be able to say I followed my heart to where I needed to be. The best part of all of this is the connections I have made along the way, and opportunities I've been given to share with those young women who feel like they want to do this job but don't know how to make it all work. While women are still underrepresented in this role, we are growing. We continue to empower the younger generations to feel they can conquer anything they put their mind to, and that includes being a good partner, mother, friend, and ally to those around us. This is not only essential for individual growth but also for increasing diversity and representation in our field.

The biggest honor I have ever received is when a past student called me and told me she wanted to do what I did. Knowing that I had that impact on her, means we female ADs are making a difference and creating our legacy as women in athletic leadership positions. It is an honor for me to be able to show my kids what mom can do and to be a part of the MNIAAA representing women ADs across the state.

Credentials: 6AA Region Rep, 6AA Rep Assembly, MSHSL Education Advisory, MSHSL LEAD Liaison, 6AA Triple A Committee Member, 5AAAA Section Volleyball Coordinator

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NIAAA QUALITY PROGRAM ASSESSMENT (QPA)



How is your activities program? How well are you supporting your coaches? Are you providing all the opportunities possible for your students? Quality coaches will do a self-assessment of their overall program and their individual performance at the end of each season and that leads to better programs for the students. Similarly, doing a self-assessment of the overall activities program, while challenging, can be one of the best ways to lead to continuous improvement. The NIAAA offers the opportunity to complete a total assessment of your activities program and to earn recognition at the local, state and national levels. While the recognition is nice, what you learn in the process is what would be most important.

The following is what the NIAAA publishes regarding the process and expectations to receive QPA recognition. Also, on the next page is an interview with Dr. Troy Urdahl, St. Anthony Village, only the second AD and school to complete the process in Minnesota. Dr. David Hartmann (retired) and Alexandria received the recognition in 2013.

Requirements of Applicants - Athletic administrator must:

- be a member in good standing with the NIAAA and state athletic administrator association
- have obtained CAA designation
- have completed LTC 799
- submit application fee with QPA application to the NIAAA office

To receive the QPA, applicants must:

- Submit evidence-based documentation on the "Final Forms" platform (access granted after submission of application fee)
- Complete the application demographic information including all required signatures
- Applications may be submitted at any time, but must be postmarked no later than April 30 to be recognized during that calendar year
- Prepare all evidence-based documentation for each of the ten categories that includes evidence of meeting the QPA standards and enter into the respective electronic folder on the Final Forms platform.
- Earn at least 80% of available points in each of the ten categories

Resources available to applicants:

- Mentor to assist with the process
- Sample of a successful QPA application, with previous applicant's permission
- Document provided on applications guidelines, assessment guidance and assessment rubrics
- Guidance instruction on use of the Final Forms platform.
- Guidance document—frequently asked questions

Benefits to QPA recipients:

- Affirm benefits of an educationally based interscholastic athletic program
- Develop long term strategic planning and continuous improvement
- Earn professional recognition at national and state levels (banner and plaque) Enhance budget justification
- Build community support and pride
- Recognition at National Athletic Directors Conference
- Satisfies project requirement for CMAA certification provided application and completion of the process meets requirements and standards established by the NIAAA board of directors



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ST ANTHONY VILLAGE - A QPA SUCCESS STORY

Dr. TROY URDAHL, St. Anthony Village



"If my purpose is to use the power of school activities to make the school a better place, this is the perfect tool for me to measure how I'm doing with that purpose!"

--Dr. Troy Urdahl

"This is the BEST Organization and Presentation of this section that I have read in any of the NIAAA QPA submissions that I have evaluated. Visionary programs. The overall presentation is exemplary and if there was a category above that St. Anthony would qualify. Students, parents, community, coaches, and administration should be grateful to have visionary leadership and commitment from the school's activities program. Congratulations!! Well done."

--From an NIAAA QPA Evaluation

On hearing that St. Anthony Village had earned a QPA award, I called Dr. Troy Urdahl, CMAA and asked if he'd be willing to sit down for a discussion of how it happened and what it meant to the district, school, and activities program. The following is a modified transcript of that discussion. St. Anthony Village is only the second Minnesota school to earn this award. Alexandria, under Dr. Dave Hartmann, also did this a decade previously. An interview with Dave is in the newsletter archives.

QPA Discussion with Troy Urdahl

What got you interested in going through the QPA process?

I have done a number of LTC classes over the years and I think it's the pursuit of continual improvement and that all of us can sharpen the saw. No matter where we are in our lives, we can always improve. I got my CAA and then I got my CMAA. I'm surrounded by some wonderful coaches who help at St. Anthony and I felt like, coming out of Covid, it was a good time for us to do a comprehensive assessment of where we're at and how we can improve. We met the criteria to be a candidate for the QPA. It really was a team effort within our office to produce all the documentation that was required for it, but I'm happy that we did it. What was the motivation? I've been interested in the process since taking LTC 799 and the time felt right where we had the opportunity, so we made it a department goal that we were going to complete the assessment and go through the process.

You said that your school already met many of the criteria for this. Can you talk about what those were?

Yes, you must complete LTC 799. And then, the AD needs to be at least a CAA. So, a couple of those big hurdles that could have prevented us from starting right away were already taken care of. I had taken 799 at the national conference. Along with the CAA, I had my doctorate and so there's a few places where we scored well. I've been an AD eighteen years and I think fifteen years-plus was another high scoring benchmark. We have a strong athletic medicine/training program and that was a big improvement and change from the previous several years.

We've been working at advancing our participation rates and getting our athletic trainer fully staffed. So, we felt like we were in a place when looking at the categories where it would be a good time to go through the assessment just to see where we were coming up short and what we are doing well, both for the affirmation and the opportunity for improvement.

You said that you did this coming out of Covid. How long did it take you?

Better part of last year. April 30th was the deadline to have everything completed and we had started in mid-fall. It's pretty exhaustive and comprehensive in what they ask for from documentation. With the people I work with, if we're going to do it, we wanted to do a nice job with it. We wanted to make sure that we provided thorough documentation in the areas that we were able to do that.

I'm a strong advocate for professional learning and professional development and I'm surrounded by educational leaders in my building who have similar values. This was a wonderful demonstration opportunity for professional development and learning in a different way. It wasn't going to a conference or reading a book, but really a great reflective exercise to go through, especially for someone who's now been doing the work for creeping up on two decades.

You mentioned 15 years of longevity...was that one of the requirements?

Not a requirement, I think it's just 5 years. It's just how they score it. Those were easy points where you didn't have to do anything. If you were an AD for blank years, you get maximum points. You reached that "platinum" status membership once you got to 15 years.

When you talk about documentation, what things are you documenting, what do you have to investigate, what do you have to display, and what do you learn about your school district and your programs that you could then improve?

A lot of it is about communication. What the NIAAA does a nice job of is they provide you with a mentor to go through the process. We had Rich Bechard. He was our mentor and he provided wonderful examples and exemplars. You use Final Forms to do your submissions and Final Forms does a nice job of providing exemplars, too. So, you're able to compare what you have versus some best practices from other schools. It's a built-in, self-paced evaluation where you're able to look to make sure your 'i's are dotted and your 't's are crossed. I would say that the areas of greatest improvement for us were process, procedure, and communication. With the way the world has evolved with technology and how athletics and activities have changed and how we administer...we're not mailing contracts anymore, for example.

While social media can be a blessing and a curse, what it meant for us is that we had great documentation of many of our activities from the last five years to have evidence of our professional development and learning opportunities for our coaches...here's a picture of it happening. Same thing with service which is a pillar of our programs as every program does a community service project. We had dozens of examples time-stamped of projects happening...here's where they are, here's what they're doing, and here's the group doing it. So, that was really helpful for us. I think that's a big change now vs. ten years ago that without knowing it, we're documenting and leaving a digital footprint.

What involvement from the rest of the district leadership did you need?

School board was very pleased with the review and that we took the time to go through the assessment and that it had significance, we weren't going through the process to get a pat on the back. They recognized and appreciated that.

I asked a question about comparison to a Cognia (NCA) evaluation and Troy ended up talking about the following:

There are 10 main categories and within each category are sub-categories. So, overall, hundreds of categories where you're asked to produce evidence and documentation. We pushed ourselves to try to and maximize points in every category, and if we couldn't, to make sure we were putting something in place where we could in the future. I think you can get QPA recognition with 80%, and so if you felt confident in your scoring, you could probably skip some categories, but we didn't do that. We turned every rock over the whole way through. Our event coordinator, Mary-Clare Johnsen, who did most of the archeology would do a wonderful job of gathering information (with my help since I've been there so long) and getting everything posted on the Final Forms and then you have to provide a description of it.

How involved were coaches, athletes and students overall? Also, how about your office help?

Couldn't do it without the office help. It was a team effort the whole way. Kelly Woods was there in the beginning, Mary-Clare was there through it all, and Zach Siggelkow helped finish it.

We have a coaching mentor system which is part of the QPA where we scored really well. I'm lucky enough that we have instructional mentors for all of our head coaches. There is one instructional mentor who works with our advisors and two mentors who work with our head coaches that help set their goals and support their purpose. This is done each year and it's all tied in to how we evaluate. They were a big help and a big part of it.

With students we work hard in providing the best guidance and experience we can to our student leaders through our captains council. Just having those student leaders and the captains council in place was a big part of it, but otherwise students aren't really part of the process for building the QPA portfolio.

What benefits do students get from this since, in the end, that's who this is all for?

That they have an activities department that's committed to growth and to providing the best experience possible. I probably should have answered your first question with this...if my purpose is to use the power of school activities to make the school a better place, this is the perfect tool for me to measure how I'm doing with that purpose! Each and every day I try to show up and live out that purpose. Some days are better than others, some days we'll hit it out of the park and some days we'll swing and miss and strike out altogether. That guided focus is always on the opportunity we have to work with student-athletes to positively influence them, to put them on a better path that will help them every day of their lives for the rest of their lives. A program doing the QPA...if you're not student-centered, a) you're probably not doing the assessment or b) the assessment's going to tell you, you need to reevaluate what you're doing.

Thinking about the job itself, how did you find the time?

In spurts. There were times when it was hard to get things done because of the cycle of the job. And then, we absolutely captured those moments like between the seasons. When we got into March, spring break was a really busy week. That was like our "go" week where we were in the office and we made our final push. That was really the time where we found all the pieces and we organized them and found what we were missing. If Mary-Clare had any spare time, that's where she would go. For someone smarter than me, it'd be a wonderful summer activity – we chose to do it during the school year! Although there are some benefits to doing it during the school year, you have access to more people. It would be a great summer activity, especially if you look forward to the next school year and what changes you want to make.

Obviously, there's benefit to the students, but it also gives a good feeling to affirm what you're doing matters. Now, you're done, you'll be recognized at the NIAAA conference, you'll get a nice banner... how do you keep moving down that same path making sure that it's not..."Whew...I'm done!"

You know...by raising your hand. I've been surrounded by wonderful people my entire professional career. You do that exercise... "What would your old self tell your young self, and I think I did OK with this, but you can always do better..." Listen or your tongue will keep you deaf!" There's a lot of wisdom out there. For those willing to get involved and surround themselves with great people, that's where great opportunities come from. If you're willing to serve and willing to help out, that's what opens doors for you. In my own professional life, being fortunate enough to be active in the coaches association, president of the coaches association, honored to serve on the MSHSL Board and serve as board president, and then very active with the baseball coaches association, there's always been some irons in the fire. I like projects and I like to keep busy and I think this job has wired me where I have a hard time sitting still now. We get one crack at this life and I don't want to live a life with any regrets and we only have so much time to get it done.



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Reach out to alumni! Your school's alumni have valuable memories of playing on the team and are more than happy to support a new generation of players.

Let them know they aren't forgotten by reuniting them at an appreciation gala. Cater a nice meal, host a silent auction, and give an award ceremony honoring alumni for their past achievements.

Reach out to alumni by mail with a formal invitation inviting them to purchase a ticket to the event. We also recommend creating a Facebook event and private Facebook group to invite guests for whom you don't have addresses and to keep everyone in the loop leading up to the event.

Make ticket purchases simple by offering an online ticketing system.

2. Talent Show

Shine the spotlight on the team's classmates by hosting a school-wide talent show! Whether you open up the talent show to students, faculty, or members of the community-people love to see the hidden talents of people they know.

Set a date when the school's auditorium is free, then promote sign-ups for a couple of weeks before the event. Sell tickets online, at school functions, and at community events. Make sure you have someone on board who knows how to run the light and sound onstage.



3. Athletic Clinics & Day Camps

Local kids often look up to high school athletes in their town. Give kiddos a chance to spend time with their heroes at Athletic Clinics & Day Camps.

Clinics and day camps can take place for one day or up to a week in the summer. Invite kids to come to learn the basics of the sport, play games and eat snacks. Give each child a camp T-shirt and include a performance or "game" at the end for parents to watch.

You can promote the camp online and at community events. Ask parents to register in advance so you know how many children to provide food and T-shirts for.

4. Golf Tournament

This fundraiser takes a little more planning but it's a sure crowd-pleaser and money-maker. Partner with a local golf course to host a golf tournament one Saturday in the spring or summer. There are lots of ways you can raise funds with a golf tournament. Sell tickets to participate, tickets to enter and concession tickets.

You can also ask local businesses to sponsor the teams. For more complex fundraising events like this one, a handy school event planning checklist is a good place to start.

5. 50/50 Raffle

Who doesn't love the chance to win cash? Sell raffle tickets with the promise that the winner of the raffle gets 50% of the cash collected with the other 50% going to the remainder of the team.

Fans will love donating cash and upping the ante, all while increasing the proceeds the team will ultimately take.



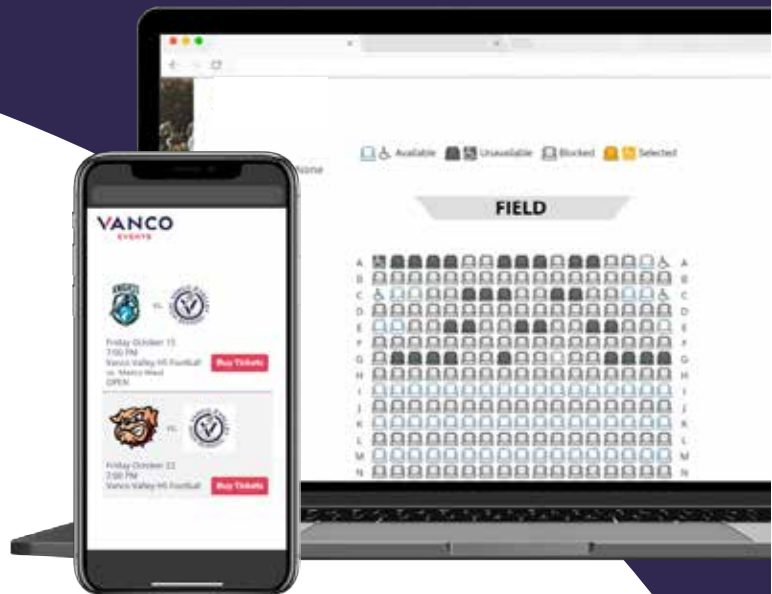
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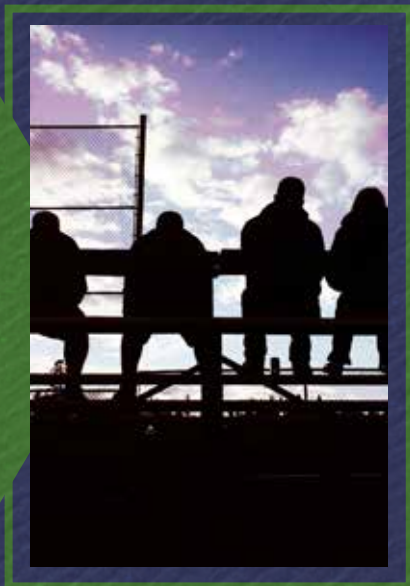


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NIAAA AND IMPROVING AS AN AD



"It's getting better all the time, better, better, better!" --The Beatles

In 1996, the NIAAA first began offering courses in the Leadership Training Program to help ADs get better as athletic administrators. Although certification began in 1988, the LTI program helped to standardize the educational process. Through this, ADs across the country have invested time and effort to become better leaders for their schools and communities. As levels of certification have been added, there are now several options: **RAA** – Registered Athletic Administrator: **RMSAA** – Registered Middle School Athletic Administrator **CAA** – Certified Athletic Administrator: **CMAA** – Certified Master Athletic Administrator

Requirements for each are as follow

RAA – Bachelor's Degree

LTC 501, 502, 503

\$75 for NIAAA members to apply

RMSAA – Bachelor's Degree

LTC 501, 502, 503, 504, 700, 701

Employed as an AD or Middle School AD

\$100 for NIAAA members to apply

CAA – Bachelor's Degree

LTC 501, 502, 503, 504, 506

2+ years experience employed as an AD

Pass the CAA Exam (given at the National Conference and/or the MNIAAA conference)

\$175 for NIAAA members to apply

CMAA – Bachelor's Degree

LTC 501, 502, 503, 504, 506, 508, 510

1 course at the 600 level

1 course at the 700 level

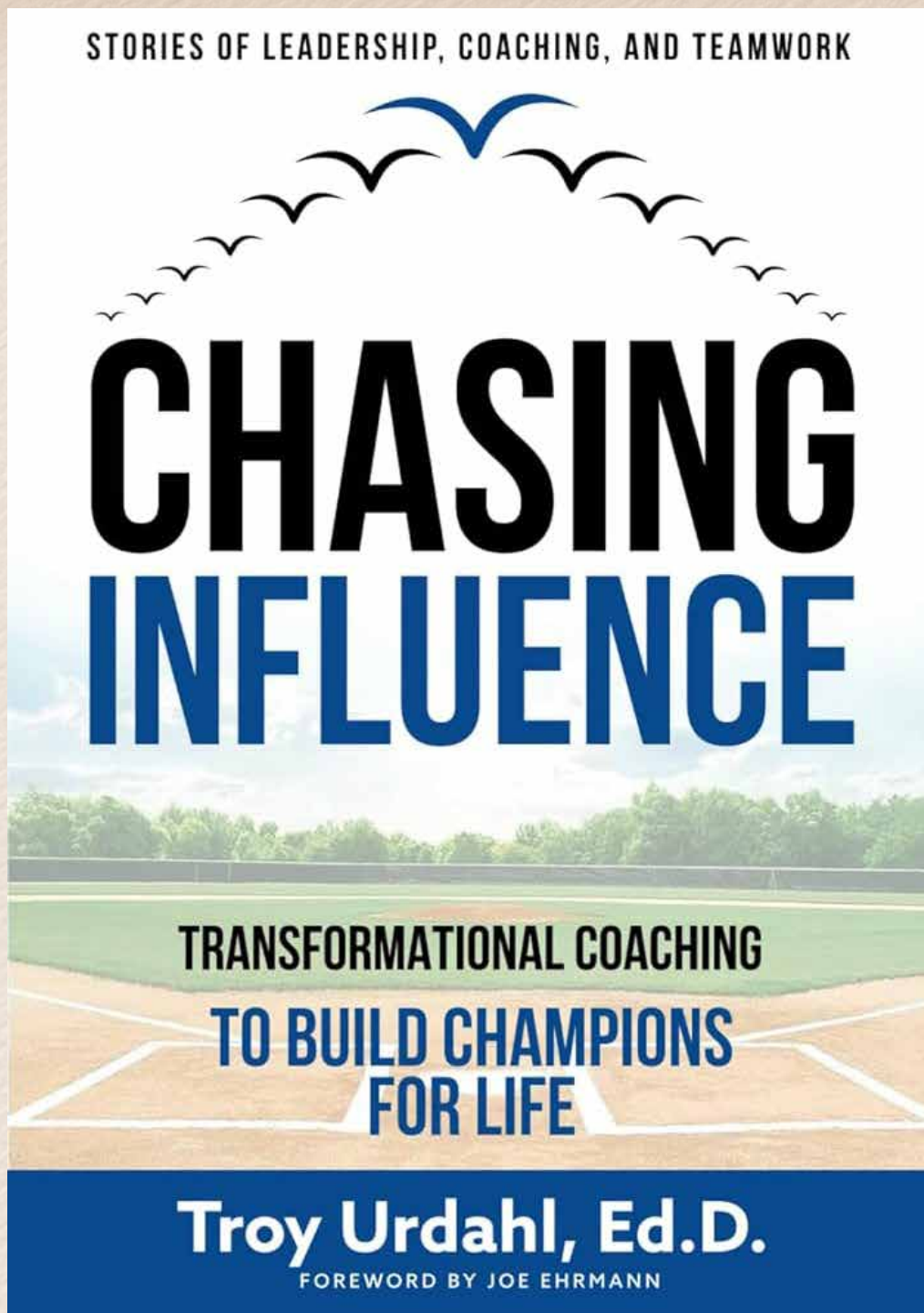
3 Elective courses

Complete a qualified project

\$200 for NIAAA members to apply

You'll hear reference to both LTI and LTC. LTI stands for Leadership Training Institute and refers to the overall program and all the courses involved. LTC stands for Leadership Training Course and is used with each individual course...LTC 501, LTC 502, etc.

All LTI courses are offered at the National Conference each year in four different sessions. Plus, all courses needed for RAA or CAA certification are available online through the NIAAA. Over a three-year period, the courses needed for CAA will be offered at the MNIAAA state conference along with a few others. And, even if you do not plan to apply for certification, the opportunity to improve yourself through these courses can't be overstated. You will learn and you will be better at what you do.



As ADs and coaches, we should always be looking for ways to improve. Sometimes that comes from attending a conference or reading an article. Sometimes it comes from conversations with others in similar situations. One method I've always enjoyed is to read a book that can add an insight or idea to improve your program. Chasing Influence by Dr. Troy Urdahl, is such a book. And, it's written by one of our own! This is a book that can be parsed out with individual segments used as guides for discussions with a coaches group or a captains council. Well worth the time and effort that Troy put into it.



GET TO KNOW...

SHAWN ROED Duluth East Greyhounds



1. What is your educational background?

Worked in the financial industry prior to going into education, Bachelor of Business Administration with minors in Economics and Coaching - University of Minnesota-Duluth, Bachelor of Science in Marketing Education - University of Wisconsin-Stout, Masters of Educational Instruction- University of Wisconsin-Superior, Principal K-12 Certification/Masters - University of Wisconsin-Superior

2. In what sports or activities were you active in high school and/or college?

Ran Cross Country and played Hockey at Duluth East HS

3. What schools have you served as a teacher, coach, director, or administrator? How many years at each?

Coached Soccer, Golf, and Hockey at Duluth East, Hockey at Duluth Central, Active Youth Hockey and Soccer Coach. In my 18th year as AD at Duluth East.

4. Who were some of the role models who have influenced your career as a coach, director, or athletic administrator?

Dick Skogg former East AD and Hall of Fame Coach, Mike Mierincki former East AD and legendary teacher - They both set high standards and were impactful on generations of Greyhounds.

5. Who are current colleagues who have made a positive impact on your work?

From the custodians to game workers, our administrative support staff, to coaches and teaching staff - we are blessed here at Duluth East to have so many people that care about kids and go above and beyond.

6. What has been your most memorable moment in interscholastic activities? What made it memorable?

Being involved in our Unified Athletic Program and our Hall of Fame - involving and recognizing others is one of my favorite parts of the job.

7. How would you describe the athletic climate in your community?

Passionate and driven, we are fortunate to have parents, community members, and local businesses that have stepped up to support our programs.

8. What part of your job might be unique compared to other ADs around the state?

I cover special education IEPs and supervise - I do it all at East, and that is ok with me.

9. What is your favorite Minnesota sports venue whether high school, college, or pro? Why?

I love our local neighborhood hockey rink, Portman. It brings together families, community, students, and youth players - where you see participation for fun and competition.

10. What are some of your spare time interests?

I chase my three boys around coaching competitive soccer and hockey, and it doesn't leave much time for anything else. I also like to golf and fish - nothing better than to share that time outdoors with my family and friends.

11. Married? Children? If so, how are they involved because of your role as an administrator?

Married to my wife Pam, former HS state Dancer and MSHSL Dance official from Aitkin, three boys Jake, Jax, and Josh.



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GET TO KNOW...

RYAN PAHL

Norman County East & Ulen-Hitterdal



1. What is your educational background?

Moved to Minnesota in the Spring of 2004 from Racine, Wisconsin. Graduated from Pequot Lakes HS in 2008. Bachelor of Science in both Health Education and Physical Education from NDSU in 2012.

2. In what sports or activities were you active in high school and/or college?

Played Football, Basketball and Baseball while in High School. 3 year letter winner in Football. 2 year letter winner in Baseball.

3. What schools have you served as a teacher, coach, director, or administrator? How many years at each?

Taught elementary PE at Pine River-Backus for 3 years. I coached junior high football all 3 years and also helped coach for all of the varsity games. I was an assistant track and field coach for all 3 years, and learned to coach the pole vault, having never done it before. It was an eye-opening experience with lots of videos watched and learning from a lot of other coaches at meets. I also ran the basketball and volleyball score clocks all 3 years. Currently in my 7th year at Ulen-Hitterdal School teaching health and PE. I'm in my 7th year as head track and field coach for NCE/UH. I've coached girls basketball for 7 years as well. Two years as C-team coach and this will be my 5th as the junior varsity coach. 4th year as the AD for two districts (Norman County East and Ulen-Hitterdal). I officiate as many lower-level contests as I can, not only because it makes my job easier because I don't have to find somebody else, but it also gives me a great opportunity to see the young Titans play and compete.

4. Who were some of the role models who have influenced your career as a coach, director, or athletic administrator?

Gary Grewe, my basketball coach in HS, was a big influence into wanting to become a coach. He was honest, transparent and always had a reason for his decisions. His communication style was direct, but you always knew he had your best interest at heart. I still get Christmas cards from Gary and his wife, Tina, who were big supporters of mine, helped me navigate the craziness that was being a high school student-athlete. I was fortunate enough to run into Gary while officiating an elementary basketball tournament he was coaching at. That made my day.

Tom Demars, Pine River/Backus head football coach and head track and field coach. He was the first coach that I worked under once I began my professional career. The information I gained while watching him run those two programs helped me build the NCE/UH track and field program from scratch my first year at Ulen-Hitterdal. The way he interacted with his assistant coaches and his laid-back personality helped me learn to tone down my own approach to coaching and connect with student-athletes.

5. Who are current colleagues who have made a positive impact on your work?

All of the Pine-to-Prairie conference ADs have been a great group to work with. Many of us are in that 3-4 year range and started during or right after COVID. We communicate well and have a sense of security that we can always ask questions if we are unsure of something. The few ADs in the PTP that have been around a little longer are definitely great sources of information and they are gentle with their answers when we ask fairly basic questions. Also, it's a GREAT group to go down to the MNIAAA conference with!

6. What has been your most memorable moment in interscholastic activities? What made it memorable?

Besides being fortunate enough to attend the girls and boys basketball state tournaments as a student at Pequot Lakes, which was a blast! (The atmosphere and school spirit were amazing to be around.) I would have to say your typical Friday night lights moments while playing high school football. There's not really a more surreal moment than lacing up the cleats, squeezing into your shoulder pads, putting on way too much eye-black and going out to play a game in front of hundreds (it was a smaller school remember) of people, all there to see you and your teammates compete. Competition was and still is a driving force within my life, but those Friday night lights were competition and goosebumps at its best.

7. How would you describe the athletic climate in your community?

There are many community members who come out to support our student-athletes at both home and away events, even if they haven't had children or grandchildren in the schools for 5, 10 or even 40 years! As with many schools our size, numbers play a huge part in our success, but we are definitely on the rise. The numbers within our junior high teams are at an all-time high since I've been here. We have had some grades in the high schools that don't quite have the numbers we have had in the past, which is putting some strain on the younger student-athletes to compete at higher levels. I'm excited to see how these 7th and 8th graders develop in the coming years.

8. What part of your job might be unique compared to other ADs around the state?

My story might be similar to a lot of the other smaller school AD's because I am not a full-time AD. I teach health to 7th, 8th and 9th graders, teach an 11th and 12th grade strength and conditioning class, teach a 7th and 8th grade study skills class and I'm the 7-12 Title I Coordinator at Ulen-Hitterdal. I am the AD for two separate school districts (Norman County East and Ulen-Hitterdal). In my tenure as the AD, I've also been the Distance Learning Coordinator, District Assessments Coordinator and Strength and Conditioning Director.

**9. What is your favorite Minnesota sports venue whether high school, college, or pro? Why?**

I enjoyed the old Metrodome. I was fortunate enough to play there twice for baseball, and it had great memories because of that. Otherwise, the answer I'd give is any high school football field on a Friday night. (And now some Thursdays and Saturdays). It still gives me chills when I supervise our home games to see the teams competing and giving it their all.

10. What are some of your spare time interests?

I enjoy watching sports, especially the Green Bay Packers. If I'm not doing something sports related, it probably involves Star Wars, Lord of the Rings, Game of Thrones or some other sort of sci-fi/medieval stuff.

11. Married? Children? If so, how are they involved because of your role as an administrator?

My wife Nicole and I have been married for 7 years. I have one 3-year-old son who keeps us on our toes every day. I'm pretty sure I'd be able to pick out the Paw Patrol theme song at a heavy metal concert at this point. My wife is a member of the Titans Booster Club and they both come to many of the events that I supervise and coach. I hope my son is heavily involved in school activities as he gets older.



GET TO KNOW...

JEREMY ROBINSON

Cedar Mountain Cougars



1. What is your educational background?

I graduated from Redwood Valley High School in 1997. In 2002, I graduated from Minnesota State University, Mankato with a degree in elementary education and middle school social studies. I earned my Master's degree in Teaching and Learning from MSU, Mankato in 2021.

2. In what sports or activities were you active in high school and/or college?

I played tennis, football, and basketball. I was also active in band, jazz band, choir, pit orchestra, and knowledge bowl.

3. What schools have you served as a teacher, coach, director, or administrator? How many years at each?

I've been at Cedar Mountain since 2006, with the last 16 years being as activities director, teacher, and community education coordinator. Early in my tenure, I coached junior high girls basketball. Prior to Cedar Mountain, I taught part time for one year at Redwood Valley and coached junior high baseball and boys basketball. I was also the head girls and boys tennis coach at Redwood Valley from 2005-2016 and have again been co-head coach of the boys since 2020.

4. Who were some of the role models who have influenced your career as a coach, director, or athletic administrator?

Denny Stoterau at Redwood Valley was a big help to me early in my career and I benefited from coaching for him while being an AD colleague. Bill Krinke and Gary Bestmann were fantastic music directors that influenced my path in education and Harvey Shaw gave me the opportunity to develop as a tennis coach.

5. Who are current colleagues who have made a positive impact on your work?

I'm lucky to work with a great group of ADs in the Tomahawk Conference. If there was one positive of going through AD life during COVID, it was being able to navigate the challenges with that group. Our collaborative efforts benefited our students tremendously.

6. What has been your most memorable moment in interscholastic activities? What made it memorable?

Qualifying as an individual for the state tennis tournament was a great way to cap off the spring season of my senior year. As a coach, winning a section title in girls tennis was a special experience and I was fortunate enough to coach a doubles team in a state finals match. As an AD, having our girls basketball team win a state tournament semifinal game (in OT) in the afternoon at Target Center and then driving to Mankato to watch our boys team play in the section final (unfortunately lost...in OT) was an experience I'll never forget. Coordinating team, fan, and pep band buses for that was trial by fire for a young AD and probably added some gray hairs prematurely.

7. How would you describe the athletic climate in your community?

Being a small school, we sometimes struggle with participation numbers, but our community is proud and supportive of our students. Athletic contests become community events that bring people together and oftentimes help get through long Minnesota winters.

8. What part of your job might be unique compared to other ADs around the state?

I'm probably not too different from any AD in a small, rural district. I spend the majority of my day teaching 6th grade math and social studies. Our district consists of two communities and, in addition, we have a number of paired programs so I spend a lot of time coordinating transportation. I also serve as our school's community education coordinator.

9. What is your favorite Minnesota sports venue whether high school, college, or pro? Why?

I enjoy a Saturday afternoon football game at Blakeslee Stadium (MSU, Mankato). The seats aren't the most comfortable, but no other venue gets you as close to the action. Spending a Friday afternoon/evening watching the state football games at US Bank Stadium is tough to beat as well.

10. What are some of your spare time interests?

Golf and tennis are at the top, but I also love to cook and travel whenever I get the time.

11. Married? Children? If so, how are they involved because of your role as an administrator?

I've been married to my wife, Ginny, for the past 6 years. She's been very supportive of my coaching and the time commitments that come with being an AD. I've even coaxed her into running the scoreboard for a few football games.



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GET TO KNOW...

DAVE NIEMI

Becker Bulldogs



1. What is your educational background?

I am a Graduate of Aurora-Hoyt Lakes HS- 1986. I then attended Mesabi Community College for two years earning an Associate of Arts degree in 1988. I earned my Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education/Social Studies/ Coaching Licensure at St. Cloud State University in 1991.

2. In what sports or activities were you active in high school and/or college?

I was a 4-yr letterwinner in Hockey (Aurora-Hoyt Lakes). After graduating high school, I played 2 years of hockey at Mesabi CC. In the spring, summer, and fall months, I raced motocross (16 years 1980-1995) all around the state of Minnesota. I competed in the Amateur Motocross Nationals at Loretta Lynn's Ranch in Tennessee in 1988 finishing 13th in the nation in my class. In 1993, I was the 25A+ class MN State Champion. I still ride my dirt bike for fun today.

3. What schools have you served as a teacher, coach, director, or administrator? How many years at each?

My first two years after college (1991-92, 1992-93), I was a part time Social Studies teacher and assistant boys hockey coach at my hometown, Mesabi East HS. In 1993-94, I had the opportunity to be an assistant boys hockey coach and a substitute teacher at Faribault HS. I actually lived in the basement of the Faribault HS AD, Lowell Nomeland (MNIAAA Hall of Fame and former President), and I had my first witnessing of the life of an activities administrator. In 1994, I was hired as a social studies teacher /head boys hockey coach and assistant girls tennis coach at Crosby-Ironton HS. That stint lasted 10 years. I was laid off in 2004 due to huge economic cutbacks (25 teachers were cut) at Crosby-Ironton. In 2005-06, I was rehired in Crosby to take Roger Twigg's AD position (as he had retired) and a part-time social studies teacher. I held those positions until 2010-11. In 2011-12, I was hired as the Activities Director at Becker High School where I am currently in my 13th year.

4. Who were some of the role models who have influenced your career as a coach, director, or athletic administrator?

A couple of my biggest coaching influences from when I was growing up to when I started coaching were Ed Berdick and Dick Ratai. Ed coached me in youth hockey every year but one from my mite through bantam years, and then also during my high school years at Aurora-Hoyt Lakes HS. I first met Dick as an elementary phy. ed teacher and he was also a high school assistant hockey coach at the time. In Mr. Ratai's PE class during my 4th grade year, we played hockey every day, yes, every day. As a hockey kid, I had no problem with that. Both were

influences in not only hockey but also character and positively promoting our school and supporting all activities, not just hockey. Some of my biggest AD Influences have been Glen Hasselberg (Staples-Motley HS); Roger Twigg (Crosby-Ironton HS); John Schumacher (Park Rapids HS). Each helped to shape me as a young Activities Administrator and who I am in that role today.

5. Who are current colleagues who have made a positive impact on your work?

Over the years I have worked with quite a few ADs from different conferences and regions but a few that have played a role in shaping who I am and how I see things are Emmett Keenan (St. Cloud Cathedral HS), Gary Revenig (Monticello HS), and Keith Cornell (STMA). Each of them are great role models and are always there to help with questions or advice. I also have to add my assistant at Becker, Jesse O'Neill. I couldn't do my job without her, and Becker HS is very lucky to have her.

6. What has been your most memorable moment in interscholastic activities? What made it memorable?

My most memorable on the job moments have been the Becker football team winning back to back State 4A Championships in 2014 and 2015. Winning back-to-back championships is quite an accomplishment and a very tough challenge for a program and it was special to play a part of those accomplishments for that program and for our school.

7. How would you describe the athletic climate in your community?

Becker has a great athletic climate. We have high participation numbers and people are very passionate and supportive of our activity programs.

8. What part of your job might be unique compared to other ADs around the state?

It is not totally unique, but I think with the number of varsity programs that we manage (30) and the number of middle school programs we also manage (14) with just two people in our office, I feel that is rare. Many schools with that many 7-12 programs have a Middle School AD in the mix. In Becker, my assistant and I manage all 7-12 athletic and fine arts activities.

9. What is your favorite Minnesota sports venue whether high school, college, or pro? Why?

I would have to say Dwight Lundeen Stadium in Becker. Friday night football in Becker is like no other that I have experienced. The stadium setup without a track around it allows the fans to be really close to the game itself and the smell of pork chops cooking on the grill is a Becker thing.



10. What are some of your spare time interests?

I am an avid bicyclist. Whether on the road or mountain bike, if I have the time, I am probably putting in miles on one or the other. I still ride my dirt bike during the summer months and my wife and I enjoy traveling with the North Shore being one of our favorite destinations.

11. Married? Children? If so, how are they involved because of your role as an administrator?

I have been married to Kay for 12 years. I actually met her at a social outing during the AD Conference in St. Cloud 14 years ago. We have three adult children, Paule(26), Cory(25), daughter-in-law Lydia, and Hannah(23). All three were involved in athletics in high school so they understand my role as an Activities Director. Kay and our kids have been incredibly understanding and supportive of my role as an Athletic Administrator over the years.