

**NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS**



NEWS RELEASE

**Seven awards to be presented at
NFHS Girls and Women in Sports Day Luncheon**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Bruce Howard

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (January 31, 2008) — Awards will be presented to five outstanding Indiana high school athletes, one coach and one administrator at the National Girls and Women in Sports Day Luncheon February 7 at the Indianapolis Downtown Marriott.

The ninth annual event, hosted by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), is presented by the Oxley Financial Group of Raymond James & Associates.

Ruth Riley, who plays for the San Antonio Silver Stars in the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), will be the guest speaker. Riley has strong Indiana ties,

having been a high school All-American at Denver North Miami High School and college player of the year at the University of Notre Dame.

WISH-TV of Indianapolis will serve as media partner of the event, and the luncheon will be emceed by Jeané Coakley, sports reporter at WISH.

Following are the five Indiana athletes who will be honored with special awards at the February 7 luncheon:

The **NCAA Robert F. Kanaby Citizenship Award**, given to the person who best exemplifies the ability to strive for excellence in athletics and academics, will be presented to **Lauren Marshall**, a senior at Garrett (Indiana) High School. Marshall is a four-year letter winner in soccer, basketball and softball, and she is ranked No. 1 in her class academically. She has also served on the Student Council and as student body president.

The **Leadership Award**, presented to an individual who demonstrates the ability to motivate others to accomplish a specific goal or objective, will be given to **Ashley Thomas**, a student at Lutheran High School in Indianapolis. Thomas has served on the Student Council and the golf team for the past four years. She won the Christian Leadership award twice, and was instrumental in starting a Habitat for Humanity chapter at her school.

The **Outstanding Contribution to Sport Award**, presented to a student or team that has made significant contributions that advance, promote, assure and/or improve their sport or activity, will be given to **Aubrey Little**, a senior at Park Tudor High School in Indianapolis. Little, a three-sport athlete and academic honor student, helped to revive interest in track and cross country at her school by starting a running club. She has been cross country team captain and most valuable player for three years.

The **Achievement Award**, given to a student or team that has overcome personal obstacles to achieve significant success, will be presented to **Brittany Bedwell**, a junior at West Washington High School in Campbellsburg, Indiana. A member of the volleyball and track teams, Bedwell overcame Meniere's disease and the death of her father to win the volleyball team's Best Blocker and Mental Attitude awards and a No. 1 ranking in her class academically.

The **Courage Award**, presented to an individual who overcomes adversity through persistence and determination, will be given to **Mahogany Williams**, a four-year basketball letter winner at Arlington High School in Indianapolis. Williams has maintained a 3.8 grade-point average and used her leadership skills as a volunteer and mentor at the Wheeler-Dowe Boys and Girls Club, where she was named High School Youth of the Year.

One high school coach and one high school athletic director also will be honored with special awards:

The **IHSAA Sportsmanship Award**, which acknowledges a person who has demonstrated responsible behavior in victory and defeat, will be presented to **Deb Webster**, athletic director at Terre Haute South High School the past 13 years. Webster has initiated sportsmanship conferences at THS, which are attended by athletes in all sports. She also has initiated funding for several building projects and has organized and administered numerous IHSAA tournament events.

The **Spirit of Sport Award**, presented to an individual who has demonstrated a dedication to interscholastic athletics and activity participation with a “true spirit” of sport, will be given to **Jacquie Rost**, volleyball coach at Elkhart Memorial High School. Rost, who has 340 victories in 13 years as volleyball coach and was 4A state runner-up this past season, raised about \$30,000 to help offset medical expenses for the family of Ashli Hepler, an assistant coach at Elkhart Memorial who passed away after a battle with cancer.

To order tickets (\$45 per ticket or \$450 for a table of 10), contact Kelly Russell at the NFHS at 317-822-5745 or krussell@nfhs.org. Doors open at 11 a.m. February 7, and the luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. and will conclude by 1:30 p.m.

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

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 18,500 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, speech and debate coaches and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS Web site at www.nfhs.org.

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