

Connecticut SPORTS WRITERS' ALLIANCE

69th
GOLD KEY
DINNER

Scott Burrell

Pete Shuler

John Gardner

Joe Benanto

April 25, 2010 • Aqua Turf Club, Southington

TONIGHT'S SCHEDULE

MASTER OF CEREMONIES: Rich Coppola, WTIC, FOX 61**INVOCATION:** Rev. Owen Sanderson**WELCOME:** Bob Ehalt, CSWA President, New Haven Register**NATIONAL CHAMPIONS:** University of Connecticut women's basketball team, Trinity College squash team**JOHN WENTWORTH GOOD SPORT AWARD:** Buck Iannacone (Westport), Melinda Hedding (East Lyme), Rev. Owen Sanderson (Hamden), Bob Fralick (Middletown), Paul LaFleur (Bristol), Don Lukowski (New Britain), Mike Bendzinski (Manchester).**BO KOLINSKY SCHOLARSHIP:** Tim Healey, Danbury High School**PRESIDENT'S AWARD:** Stephanie Ford, CIAC**HANK O'DONNELL FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR:** Rachele Fico, Masuk High School softball pitcher,**BILL LEE MALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR:** Aaron Hernandez, Bristol, University of Florida tight end.**BOB CASEY COURAGE AWARD:** Deb Gruen, Hamden, Yale; John Tartaglio, Milford.**DOC MCINERNEY HIGH SCHOOL COACH OF THE YEAR (male sport):** Tom Marcucci, Notre Dame of West Haven football coach.**DOC MCINERNEY HIGH SCHOOL COACH OF THE YEAR (female sport):** Nelson Mingachos, Immaculate High School girls soccer coach.**ART MCGINLEY AWARD:** Sean Barker, New Haven Register.**GOLD KEY:** John Gardner, Avon Old Farms hockey coach**GOLD KEY:** Joe Benanto, former Shelton High School and Yale University coach**GOLD KEY:** Pete Shuler, former girls basketball coach at Westbrook High School and boys basketball coach at North Branford**GOLD KEY:** Scott Burrell, Hamden, UConn basketball and NBA player

Our thanks to . . .

A dinner with a rich tradition like this one could never happen on an annual basis without the help and dedication of too many people to mention in such a small space.

Yet we would be remiss if we did not offer our thanks to several people and organizations who played a key role in making this year's Gold Key dinner yet another success story.

This includes Alyson Bowman, who did such a marvelous job of producing this program, and publisher Ed Condra and editor Jack Kramer at the New Haven Register, who allowed us to use their newspaper's pagination system.

Also, Jason Zahner and publisher Elizabeth Ellis of the Manchester Journal-Inquirer for their invaluable role in printing the program.

And, of course, a tip of the hat goes out to our master of ceremonies, Rich Coppola from WTIC, FOX 61.

Finally, there's Andy Yelenak, who once again crafted the fabulous artwork that graces the cover of this publication.

Again, to them, and so many others who unselfishly helped us turn tonight into such a great celebration for another outstanding group of honorees, we say thank you.

Ford recipient of President's Award

Along with tonight's other awards, the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance will present its President's Award to Stephanie Ford of the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference.

Ford played an integral part in bringing together the CIAC and CSWA to establish media guidelines for covering the state championships.

These policies have made it easier for the media to work at

these events, allowing reporters to better detail the sights and sounds of these important contests.

The CSWA thanks Ford and fellow CIAC officials for their decision to add features like wireless internet service at the state championships, and we look forward to working with the CIAC in the future to make coverage of our state's scholastic sports even better.

Welcome to the 69th Gold Key Dinner

On behalf of the officers and membership of the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance, welcome to our 69th annual Gold Key dinner.

Tonight we once again salute the very best in Connecticut athletics and we thank you for your support in helping us to keep this important sports tradition alive and vibrant.

Connecticut has been home to some of our nation's best and most famous athletes and we are honored to add four more distinguished figures to our list of the state's greatest sports figures.

In presenting the Gold Key to Joe Benanto, Scott Burrell, John Gardner and Pete Shuler we are recognizing their numerous accomplishments over the years and the important role they played in making sports such an exciting, enjoyable and

irreplaceable pastime for so many of us.

We also acknowledge our other award recipients who will form such an impressive head table tonight.

From hilly local road races to chilly ice rinks to the blinding spotlight of national championship football games, they have represented our state with class and dignity and are richly deserving of our thanks and praise, and I invite you to read about them in the pages of this program.

I hope you enjoy tonight's festivities and will return to join us next year when we celebrate our 70th dinner.

Bob Ehalt
CSWA President
New Haven Register

CSWA PRESIDENTS

1939: Edward Shugrue, Bridgeport Post
1940: Jack O'Brien, Bridgeport Times-Star
1941: William Harding, Journal Courier, New Haven
1942: Bill Lee, Hartford Courant
1943-44: Alliance inactive due to World War II
1945: William O'Donnell, Waterbury Republican
1946: Robert Wilson, Bridgeport Herald
1947: Sam Cohen, Meriden Journal
1948: John Kelly, Waterbury American
1949: Louis Black, Associated Press
1950: Robert Zaiman, Hartford Courant
1951: John Leary, New Haven Register
1952: Fred Post, Middletown Press
1953: Francis McInerney, Waterbury American
1954: William Butler, Waterbury American
1955: Arthur B. McGinley, Hartford Times
1956-57: Gerald Crean, New Britain Herald
1958: William Newell, Hartford Courant
1959: Earl Yost, Manchester Herald

1960: William Cruickshank, Norwich Bulletin
1961: Howard Holcomb, Torrington Register
1962: Pat Bolduc, Hartford Courant
1963-64: Don Clerkin, Hartford Times
1965: Frank Birmingham, Sportsweek
1966-67: Bill Guthrie, New Haven Journal-Courier
1968: Milt Northrop, Waterbury Republican
1968: Gordon Smith, Hartford Courant
1969: Don Harrison, Waterbury Republican
1970-71: Ray Andresen, New Haven Register
1972: Frank Cline, Hartford Times
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1974: Tom Hine, Hartford Courant
1975: Pat Drewry, Waterbury Republican
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1977: John Bozadjian, Williamantic Chronicle
1978: George Smith, Hartford Courant
1979-80: Bohdan Kolinsky, Hartford Courant
1981: Bart Fisher, New Britain Herald

1982-83: Hal Levy, Shore Line Newspapers
1984-85: Jerry DiPietro, New Haven Register
1986: Hal Levy, Shore Line Newspapers
1987: Bart Fisher, New Britain Herald
1988-89: Matt Buckler, Manchester Journal Inquirer
1990-91: Lou Brodersen, The (Norwalk) Hour
1992-93: Scott Gray, WTIC Radio
1994-95: Ted Moynihan, Meriden Record-Journal
1996: Lou Pintek, Connecticut Post
1997-99: Matt Buckler, Manchester Journal Inquirer
2000-03: Ken Lipshez, The Herald (New Britain)
2004-06: Sean Barker, New Haven Register
2007-08: John Silver, Manchester Journal Inquirer
2008-09: Brian Girasoli, Norwich Bulletin
2009-present: Bob Ehalt, New Haven Register

Champions Award to Trinity squash, UConn women

It has been said that you can't win 'em all, but two Connecticut collegiate teams have been doing their best to dispel that notion.

Both the University of Connecticut women's basketball team and the Trinity College men's squash team continued their dominance of their sport by

winning yet another national title in 2010 while extending their record-breaking winning streaks.

Both programs will be honored at tonight's 69th annual Gold

Key dinner with the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance Championships Award.

Trinity beat Yale University 6-3 in the final of the College Squash Association (CSA) National Team Championships (Potter Trophy) to capture its 12th consecutive national title.

The Bantams finished the 2009-10 season with a 22-0 record and stretched their winning streak to 224 matches, the longest in the history of intercollegiate varsity sports.

Trinity knocked off Western Ontario, 8-1, and then Princeton, 7-2, to reach the national championship game.

The UConn Huskies became the first women's basketball program to complete back-to-back undefeated seasons as they beat

Stanford 53-47 in the NCAA Division I national championship game.

Maya Moore, the game's most outstanding player, scored 23 points and center Tina Charles added nine points, 11 rebounds and six blocks for the Huskies, who trailed 20-12 at half-time.

The victory, which capped consecutive 39-0 seasons, was the Huskies' 78th in a row, extending their own NCAA women's basketball record for consecutive wins.



GOLD KEY
2010

Benanto's winning formula behind Gold Key selection

By Bob Ehalt

New Haven Register

Winning has always been an integral part of Joe Benanto's coaching career. It has followed him like a shadow on a sunny day, through turns unseen in the average coaching career.

There have been coaches with more wins or even more state championships than Benanto. Yet what separated and elevated him from the rest was an ability to instill his winning ways into every sport he touched.

Be it baseball, basketball or football, Benanto always found a way to bring out the best in his players. That quality made him one of the state's most respected coaches, and tonight it will bring him one the state's most prestigious awards, a Gold Key from the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance.

"I'm proud of what I was able to accomplish in more than one sport," said Benanto, who still

lives and teaches in Shelton, "Regardless of the sport, I never looked at it as doing something different. It was always coaching and learning new sports seemed to come easily to me."

Benanto's coaching career spanned five different decades at Shelton High School and Yale University as he worked tirelessly to build successful programs at both the collegiate and high school levels.

He started as a baseball coach at Shelton High School in 1964. Fifteen years later, when he left to become head baseball coach at Yale, his Gaels owned four state titles, including three in a row from 1972-74, and more than 200 wins.

During most of his early days at Shelton High, Benanto also served as Shelton's boys' basketball coach and he once again built a winning program. His Shelton teams were 106-66 from 1972-1979 under his guidance.

Nearby Yale University saw the special individual Shelton had in Benanto and turned to him to take over its baseball program in 1979.

A graduate of Derby High and the University of Bridgeport, Benanto spent 14 seasons at Yale, winning 248 games and a pair of EIBL championships. His list of players with the Bulldogs included Ron Darling, a member of the New York Mets' 1986 world championship team.

Benanto's career took another turn in 1994 when he became Shelton High's football coach. Benanto led the Gaels from 1994 until he retired in 2003 and took them to three state championships (1995, 2000 and 2003). Among his players on those teams was quarterback Dan Orlovsky, who propelled the University of Connecticut to victory in the 2004 Motor City Bowl and now plays for the National Football league's Houston Texans.

After his final game, he owned



Contributed photo

Gold Key recipient Joe Benanto won 694 games in three different sports while coaching at Shelton High and Yale University.

a lifetime record of 694-424, with a 7-0 mark in state championship games.

He also enjoyed a legacy that was rewarded with induction into the Connecticut Coaches Hall of Fame, the New Haven Diamond

Club Hall of Fame and the Fairfield County Sports Hall of Fame.

And now, the coach with the perfect record in state championship games has one more perfectly proper accolade for his career — a Gold Key.



Congratulations to Coach Joe Benanto

From all of your student athletes
and fellow coaches at
Shelton High School.

You have taught us all so much.

Gardner's players get the message

By Matt Conyers

The Hartford Courant

Hours before the biggest game of his hockey career, Boston College forward Cam Atkinson was still getting advice and encouragement from his former coach, John Gardner.

This time the words of wisdom arrived via text message.

Yes, that's correct. John Gardner, 58, one of tonight's Gold Key award winners, sends text messages.

"Believe it or not, he does text message," Atkinson said. "I was just fortunate to talk to him before the game and he just wished me luck. He gave me a little encouragement."

Motivated by Gardner, Atkinson went on to score two goals to help Boston College defeat Wisconsin 5-0 in the 2010 NCAA hockey championship game at Ford Field in Detroit. More than two years after he last instructed Atkinson on the ice at Avon Old Farms, Gardner was doing what he does best: guiding young men.

Atkinson, who as a sophomore finished the season as the nation's top goal-scorer with 30, is just the latest Gardner product to find the hockey limelight. Need proof?

The list of Gardner alumni is like a Who's Who of the hockey world. Hall of Famers, Olympic skaters, steady role players, talented up-and-comers. They're all there. Among the most famous: Brian Leetch, Niko Dimitrakos, Jeff Hamilton, Chris Higgins, Jon Quick.

But college players like Nick Bonino (Boston University), Jared DeMichiel (Rochester Tech) and Atkinson are continuing to prove what so many hockey people already know. They just don't make coaches like Gardner anymore.

In 35 seasons, the legendary coach of Avon Old Farms has won 632 games and led the school to eight New England Prep Division I championships, the most recent coming last month. It was the Winged Beavers' third New England title in four years.

Gardner also has led the school to nine Founders League titles. His



Contributed photo

John Gardner has led the Avon Old Farms hockey team to 632 wins and eight New England Prep Division I titles in his 35 seasons as coach.

35-year record is 632-197-33.

While his victory totals will always be remarkable, even more remarkable is Gardner's ability to help kids realize their dream of playing in college and beyond. More than 200 of his pupils have gone on to play college hockey. His success in this regard could be seen at this year's Frozen Four, where two of the players with the best seasons — DeMichiel and Atkinson — were products of Avon Old Farms.

Simply put, players arrive at Avon and leave more mature and prepared for life on and off the ice.

Gardner's own hockey career started in prep school. He graduated from Salisbury, where his father taught, before going to Wesleyan University, where he played under Dave "Duke" Snyder.

Once he graduated from Wesleyan in 1974, Gardner moved right to Avon Old Farms, where he has taught math and been a dorm proctor, provost and assistant headmaster. He currently serves as the provost.

This past winter, Gardner was tapped for the John Mariucci Award (named for a former University of Minnesota coach), which goes to a secondary school coach who embodies the spirit, dedication and enthusiasm of Mariucci. Gardner also was named high school Coach of the Decade by the Hartford Courant.



Contributed photo

Milestones were common place for Gold Key recipient Pete Shuler during his 35-year coaching career.

Shuler took Westbrook to the pinnacle

By Pete Zanardi

CSWA Financial secretary

Mention Pete Shuler, and you think Westbrook High School.

His 17 seasons coaching girls' basketball at one of the smallest schools in the state were incredible. He guided the Knights to eight CIAC Class S championships, including six in a row, both records. There was a winning streak of 62, also a state record (since tied). His 27 consecutive tournament triumphs were another record. He kept the Shoreline town in the limelight for much of the 1980s.

His tenure at Westbrook, where his record was 318-95, was the pinnacle of an achievement-filled career. In 35 seasons coaching boys' and girls' basketball (he was also at Griswold, North Branford and Coginchaug), he was 528-281, going to the state tournament 29 times. He was the first coach with 100 CIAC victories in both boys' and girls' competition.

Shuler, a Durham native, is a member of the Connecticut High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame and the New England Basketball Hall of Fame. He also was the first male elected to the Connecticut Women's Basketball Hall of Fame.

In 19 seasons with Coginchaug High girls' soccer he was 143-139-37, making 13 tournaments. In all he coached 1,128 contests, winning 59 percent of them.

With tenures at Griswold and North Branford behind him, Shuler took over a defending Class S champion team in Westbrook a few days before the 1978-79 season began. "I needed a couple of days just to learn the players' names," he recalls. The Knights went on to post the first of three undefeated campaigns they had under Shuler, the others coming during the streak in the mid-1980s.

Insisting that he treated the boys and the girls the same, Shuler says the key to coaching is "to get every player to give 100 percent, to get them to be the best they can. Sometimes it happens and sometimes it doesn't."

Paula Fitzgerald, his assistant for all but one of the Westbrook seasons, points to Shuler's motivational skill and knowledge of the game (he spent several years officiating) as keys to maintaining the program. "He could get kids to play at the top of their game and a lot of times go beyond what their ability really was," says Fitzgerald, going on her 30th season as Westbrook athletic director.

Oddly enough, Shuler lost the first game he coached and once suffered through a 0-20 year at North Branford.

"I think, to appreciate winning, you have to experience losing," he says. "I kind of feel sorry for some of the coaches that just win all the time. You get used to winning and you think you are the reason. You are not the reason. There are lots of reasons — good athletic directors, good assistants, good players, good youth programs etc. Whether you win 20 or you lose 20, it isn't just you."

Shuler, who went to Durham High and prepped at Kents Hill in Maine, was an All-New England soccer player at Dean Junior College in Franklin, Mass.

He earned a bachelor's degree at Rio Grande College in Ohio, where he played baseball, and a master's at Eastern Kentucky. He began teaching and coaching at Newtown High. His first varsity coaching job was at Griswold. He then moved on to North Branford, where he spent 30-plus years teaching history.

After his term at Westbrook, he coached boys' basketball at North Branford and girls' basketball and soccer at Coginchaug.

GOLD KEY
2010

Mingachos gets his kicks now from coaching soccer at Immaculate High

By Matt Conyers
The Hartford Courant

Nelson Mingachos can kick a football just as well as a soccer ball. Maybe better.

But for the last 10 years or more, it's been coaching soccer that has put Mingachos in the limelight.

Mingachos served as a place-kicker at Central Connecticut State in the early 1990s, but in the past decade he returned to his old high school, Immaculate of Danbury, to coach girls' soccer. He's been with the program seven years, six as head coach. Immaculate has won six Class S championships, including five since Mingachos took over.

Immaculate won its second successive Class S title this past November when it tied Old Lyme 1-1 in the final. The Mustangs wound up the season 11-2-6.

"I'll take a tie for a state championship any day," Mingachos said. "When that banner goes on the wall, it doesn't say co-champions; it says champions."

Old Lyme was the first team to score against Immaculate in a championship game since Mingachos took over.

Mingachos was an assistant to Matt Micros for a year before Micros stepped down in 2004.

Mingachos won the South-West Conference title as well as Class S in his first two seasons as head coach and has hardly slowed since. His record over six seasons is 78-31-17.

He has piled up personal honors. Mingachos was named the Connecticut Girls Soccer Association Coach of the Year in 2008 and the NSCAA New England Girls High School (small school) Coach of the Year in 2009. He has also been named the Danbury News-Times Coach of the Year five times (2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009) and SWC Coach of the Year twice (2008, 2009).

Still, Mingachos isn't in it for the hardware. His job is to teach.

Through Immaculate and the Connecticut Football Club, where he also coaches premier level, Mingachos has instructed many All-State players and All-American Nikki Weiss, currently playing for Notre Dame. Mingachos is a member of the CGSCA All-State, All-New England, All-America Committee and is the SWC Girls Soccer League representative.

PAST WINNERS OF THE DOC MCINERNEY COACH OF THE YEAR AWARD

1975: Gary Palladino, St. Paul basketball
1976: Lou DeFillippo, Derby football
1977: Lou Astorino, Hamden hockey
1978: Rod Leyland, Ledyard wrestling
1979: Tom LaBella, Middletown basketball
1980: Bill McAllister, Ansonia football
1981: Bob Michalski, Xavier track and cross country
1982: Bill Reagan, Old Saybrook boys and girls basketball
1983: Charlie Sharos, South Windsor basketball and soccer
1984: Larry Ciotti, Hand football
1985: Frank Hauser, Glastonbury football
1986: Bob DeMayo, North Haven baseball
1987: Pete Shuler, Westbrook girls basketball
1988: Charles Bentley, Warren Harding basketball
1989: Marty deLivron, Avon soccer
1990: Carl Snitkin, Norwich Free Academy wrestling
1991: Don Bates, Berlin golf
1992: John O'Connor, Branford swimming
1993: Lou Gagliardi, New Britain track and cross country; Nancy Grace, Canton field hockey
1994: Burt Leventhal, Cheshire baseball; Ellen Mahoney, Ledyard softball
1995: Bob Faulkner, Hand-Madison boys soccer; Dave Strong, Masuk-Monroe girls basketball

1996: Steve Addazio, Cheshire football; Kathleen "Cookie" Bromage, Enfield field hockey
1997: Jim Penders, East Catholic-Manchester baseball; Ed Aston, Cheshire girls swimming
1998: David Hodge, Weaver-Hartford football; Joe Grippo, Morgan School-Clinton volleyball
1999: Charles Wolfe, Old Lyme baseball/Volley Regional-Deep River soccer; Abe Breslow, Trumbull girls soccer
2000: Jim Day, Berlin wrestling; Joe Piazza, Southington softball
2001: Joe Maher, Guilford boys soccer; Dot Johnson, Granby field hockey
2002: Ed Lynch, Simsbury boys golf; Cathy McGuirk, Branford field hockey
2003: Ed McCarthy, West Haven football; Jim Rooney, Guilford basketball
2004: Jack Hunt, Ansonia football; Theresa Napolitano, Amity-Woodbridge softball
2005: Rick Geremia, North Branford soccer; Lou Milardo, Nathan Hale-Ray softball
2006: Dick Hawks, Greenwich High girls swimming; Steve Filippone, Hand High football
2007: Beryl Piper, New Britain High basketball; Sal Coppola, Amity Regional (Woodbridge) baseball
2008: Laurie LaRusso, Darien High volleyball; Ricky Shook, Danbury High wrestling
2009: Lou Marinelli, New Canaan High football; Matt Hurlock, Coventry High girls' volleyball



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Perfection a common occurrence for Fico

By Bob Ehalt

New Haven Register

It takes an impressive resume to earn the Hank O'Donnell Female Athlete of the Year award from the membership of the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance.

Yet to categorize Rachele Fico's accomplishments at Masuk High School as simply impressive, would be doing an injustice to them.

In an incomparable four-year varsity career at Masuk of Monroe, Fico emerged as one of the best – if not the best – high school pitchers in state softball history.

Currently a freshman at Louisiana State University, Fico led Masuk to Class LL state championships in 2007 and 2008 and posted a career record of 105-3 with a ERA of 0.07.

A three-time New Haven Register State Softball Player of the

Year and 2008 and 2009 Gatorade State Player of the Year, Fico hurled a national-record 26 perfect games at Masuk.

The Oxford resident also had 47 no-hitters, 95 shutouts and 1,884 strikeouts in 775 innings.

As a senior last spring, Fico lifted Masuk to the Class LL state championship game, where the Panthers lost to Fitch 1-0, ending a 77-game winning streak.

"For four years (the other team has) been cheering for foul tips," Masuk coach Jacqui Sheftz said to the Associated Press.

Fico's accomplishments not only landed her on ESPN's SportsCenter and the pages of Sports Illustrated, they also made her one of the most heavily recruited softball players in the nation.

"She's throwing in Connecticut, which isn't exactly known as the national hotbed of softball," LSU

coach Yvette Girouard said in an Associated Press story last spring. "But I don't care what level you're participating in, the mark she's setting — you just kind of shake your head and scratch it. It's just an unbelievable feat what she's doing right now."

Fico has wasted little time in making her presence felt in the Southeastern Conference (SEC) as she posted a 13-4 record for LSU through April 15, with team-high totals of 104 strikeouts in 100 innings.

Boosted by Fico's contributions, LSU is currently ranked 14th in the nation.

"The SEC is the best of the best," Fico said during a recent conference call with state media. "You can't take anyone lightly."

Seems like the perfect spot for Fico, who will be long remembered as the best of the best in her home state of Connecticut.

PAST WINNERS OF THE HANK O'DONNELL FEMALE ATHLETE OF THE YEAR AWARD

- 1984: Julie Bolduc, Southington High pitcher
- 1985: Terry Kix, UConn field hockey
- 1986: Caroline Keggi, amateur golfer
- 1987: Danielle Benoit, Mercy (Middletown) High School runner
- 1988: Maryanne Torrellas, race walker from Clinton
- 1989: Tracy Lis, Killingly High girls basketball
- 1990: Kris Karlson, world rowing champion from Weston
- 1991: Kerry Bascom, UConn basketball
- 1992: Sarah and Karen Josephson, world champion synchro nized swimmers
- 1993: Liz Mueller, Waterford High School runner
- 1994: Terry Roy, UConn heptathlete
- 1995: Rebecca Lobo, UConn basketball
- 1996: Jennifer Rizzotti, UConn basketball
- 1997: Kerry Connors, UConn soccer
- 1998: Sara Whalen, UConn soccer
- 1999: Nykesha Sales, UConn basketball
- 2000: Kristine Lilly, U.S. Women's World Cup Soccer
- 2001: Liz Janangelo, CSWA 4-time defending champion
- 2002: Maura Danahy, Connecticut College track and cross country All-American (South Windsor)
- 2003: Suzy Whaley, golf professional (Blue Fox Run GC, Avon)
- 2004: Diana Taurasi, University of Connecticut women's basketball
- 2005: Annia Hatch, Olympic Gymnast and Liz Janangelo, Duke Golfer
- 2006: Tiffany Weimer, North Haven, Penn State soccer
- 2007: Amanda Pape, Sacred Heart University basketball
- 2008: Kristen Frost, Southern Conn. State University swimmer
- 2009: Michelle Guerette, rowing, Olympic silver medalist



Rebecca Lobo

CONGRATULATIONS RACHELE FICO



on being honored as the 2010 CSWA

Hank O'Donnell Female Athlete of the Year

The Masuk Athletic Department thanks you for continuing to make us proud of your achievements on and off the field. You have been, and continue to be, an All-American in every way.

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GOLD KEY
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Burrell's career featured more than 'The Shot'

By Ken Lipshez
New Britain Herald

The moment is fixed in the memory of University of Connecticut basketball fans who witnessed the Huskies' excursion to national prominence.

UConn vs. Clemson in the 1990 Sweet Sixteen. The Huskies are down by a point to Clemson. One second remains and UConn has the ball under its own basket.

Jim Calhoun goes to the bullpen and summons his best pitcher – Scott Burrell. He throws a strike to Tate George, who sticks a turnaround jumper to send the Huskies to the Elite Eight with a stunning 71-70 victory.

But Scott Burrell's legacy goes much deeper than just one shot. A 6-foot-7 product of Hamden High, Burrell displayed an almost unparalleled versatility in forging one of the most impressive athletic résumés in state history.

At 39, he remains the only athlete to be drafted in the first round

by professional teams in two sports. He was the first player in the history of the NCAA basketball to register more than 1,500 points, 750 rebounds, 275 assists and 300 steals. He earned an NBA championship ring with Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls in 1998. He played in every game in the NBA finals against the Utah Jazz, punctuated by his 10-point performance in a third-game win.

The depth of Burrell's athletic talent was visible early on at Hamden where he was the state's Gatorade Player of the Year in both basketball and baseball and as well as the football team's quarterback.

A hard-throwing pitcher with a fearsome downhill fastball, Burrell was selected by the Seattle Mariners in the first round (26th overall) of the 1989 June draft. He spurned professional baseball to attend UConn.

His statistics as a Husky underscored his versatility. He poured in 1,562 points, grabbed 750



Scott Burrell

rebounds, made 310 steals, dished out 293 assists and blocked 129 shots. At the time he graduated, he was UConn's career leader in steals, second in blocked shots and eighth in scoring.

After his freshman season he was drafted again, this time by the Toronto Blue Jays in the fifth round. He pitched in the Jays' system for two seasons before hanging up the cleats for sneakers.

In 1993, the NBA's Charlotte Hornets made Burrell their first-

round pick (20th overall). He played three seasons with the Hornets before being traded to the Golden State Warriors in February 1997 for Donald Royal. The Warriors traded him to the Bulls that September for Dicky Simpkins.

Released by the Bulls in January 1999, Burrell promptly signed with the New Jersey Nets, for whom he played a full year in 1999-2000. He wound up his NBA career where he started, with the Hornets in 2001.

In eight NBA seasons, Burrell played in 383 games, scored 2,649 points and had 1,332 rebounds.

Burrell has been an assistant coach under Quinnipiac head coach Tom Moore for three seasons, but it's "The Shot" for which he'll be most remembered. And he remembers a couple of things about it.

"No. 1, we blew an 18-point lead (actually 19 at one point). That was the first thing going through my head," Burrell said

in an Internet podcast with lostlettermen.com. "No. 2 was just, 'Don't let Alvin Campbell tip this ball,' because as soon as he tips it, the clock runs out."

The timeouts before the play, Burrell said, were excruciating.

"I think we called a timeout to set up a play and then they called a timeout," Burrell said during the interview. "So the whole play took like 20 minutes, it felt like. ... That was the most miserable time, because you have to still think about you lost an 18-point lead."

They say you can never go home again, but Scott Burrell has even accomplished that.

"I've always wanted to come back here to coach," Burrell told John Healy of the Quinnipiac Chronicle. "I never knew if I could or if it would happen, but when Coach Moore got the job I thought he'd be fun to work with, so I just came in here and it was just perfect timing."

Perfect timing, indeed.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

WISHES TO CONGRATULATE
FORMER HUSKY BASKETBALL PLAYER

SCOTT



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for receiving the **Gold Key Award**
from the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance



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GOLD KEY
2010

Seven to receive Wentworth Good Sport awards

Seven people with long records of contributions to sports in their communities are being honored tonight with the John Wentworth Good Sport Awards of the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance.

They are Alphonse "Buck" Iannacone of Westport, Bob Fralick of Middletown, Paul LaFleur of Bristol, the Rev. Owen Sanderson of Hamden, Mike Bendzinski of Hebron, Melinda Hedding of East Lyme and Don Lukowski of New Britain.

BUCK IANNAZONE

Iannacone has been a fixture with the Westport PAL for 57 years, starting as a coach in its football program in 1953 and handling almost every job in the organization over the decades.



He's still active, raising funds for athletic scholarships for high school seniors who started in the PAL program.

A former football, basketball and baseball player and later a softball umpire, Iannacone served in the Army during World War II, was in the Battle of the Bulge, was later wounded and received the Purple Heart. Returning home, he embarked on a 20-year career with the U.S. Postal Service. He served 10 years as president of the postal union's Norwalk local, of which he remains a volunteer trustee.

BOB FRALICK

Fralick, another Purple Heart recipient, returned from World War II combat in the South Pacific to a career in professional baseball, but his greatest impact has been on youth in the Middletown area. His Bob Fralick Baseball Camp gave instruction to more than 1,000 young people. He also was general manager of the Middletown American Legion baseball team for eight years and coached in assorted amateur sports. He played in the Giants' organization, scouted for the Phillies and was a coach for assorted

minor-league teams including Red Sox affiliates in Bristol and New Britain.

PAUL LAFLEUR

LaFleur has been involved with American Legion baseball in the state for 40 years. He oversees all aspects of the Bristol Legion program as general manager and is one of the most active promoters of Legion baseball in the state. He travels on his own to every Northeast Regional and World Series and helped bring the Legion World Series to Connecticut. He continues to push Connecticut as a site for future World Series games and spends nearly all his free time during the summer volunteering at ball fields throughout the state.

THE REV. OWEN SANDERSON

Sanderson has been a presence in Hamden High athletics almost from the moment he arrived in Connecticut in 1958. He's been in the dugout with the baseball



scorebook, on the football sidelines holding the down markers, in the hockey penalty-box as announcer and statistician. He was a founder of the school's booster club. He's handled this role while serving as pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, chaplain to the police and fire departments, and a board member for non-profit agencies.

A friend and advisor to three generations of Hamden athletes, he's received calls from former players to officiate at weddings and baptisms. Married 53 years, he has two daughters (one a former Hamden football manager) and five grandchildren.

MIKE BENDZINSKI

Bendzinski, a former Manchester High cross country coach who won a state championship in 1994, continues to serve as an ambassador for running in the state. For

more than 20 years, he has helped to provide high school and middle school runners in the state with events. Bendzinski continues to reach out to the middle school age level by conducting the middle school outdoor track championship at Manchester High and the cross country championship at Wickham Park. Without him, middle school runners would have no championship event to end their seasons.

MELINDA HEDDING

Hedding has been a big part of road racing in Eastern Connecticut. A member of the Mohegan Striders, she spends much of her time volunteering her services to the running community. Her husband, Way, is co-owner of a company that provides timing services at more than 60 races a year.

DON LUKOWSKI

Tennis and charitable giving are the domains of Lukowski, a high school coach for 28 years and founder and chairman of the annual Children's Charities Tennis Classic.

The Classic, held every August at Walnut Hill Park in New Britain for players aged 10 through 25, is one of the largest junior charity tennis events in the state. Now in its 30th year, it has raised



more than \$110,000 for pediatric programs at The Hospital of Central Connecticut at New Britain General.

Lukowski coached boys tennis at St. Thomas Aquinas High, his alma mater, from 1982 until the school closed in 1998. He is in his 10th season coaching the Newington High boys.

A graduate of the University of Hartford, he operates Donald S. Lukowski & Assoc., a firm that searches land titles and audits municipal land records.

JOHN WENTWORTH GOOD SPORT AWARD PAST WINNERS

1988: Frank McCoy, Vernon; Bernie Fields, Middletown; Lou DeBenedictis, Hartford
1989: Rene DeSaulniers, Putnam; Joe Barber, Stratford; Lew Kelley, Vernon; Matthew "Pop" Shortell, Ansonia; John Welch, Windsor; Jerome "Buzzy" Levin, Middletown; Herb Sheintop, Hartford
1990: Skip Cunningham, Vernon; Frank DeLuca, Stratford; Albert Hamrah, Middletown; Frank Nistico Sr., Westport; Bill O'Brien, Branford; Dave Sacco, Newington
1991: Joe Budwitz, Meriden; Dave Bolio, Wallingford; Ben Dodge, Vernon; Walter "Doc" Hurley, Hartford; Tom Corbo, Norwalk; Bob Boss, Milford
1992: Joe Samoska, Waterbury; Rick Sheldon, Hartford; Jack Repass, East Hartford; Jerry Dunnack, Columbia; Dave DeRosa, Fairfield; Jim O'Neill, New London; Joe Trapasso, Branford; Jim Bransfield, Middletown
1993: Dot and Fred Bondi, Norwalk; Fred Hammick, South Windsor; Bill Pomfret, Middlefield; Bill Romanowski, Vernon
1994: Fran and Fred Ahlbin, Fairfield; Jim Gallagher, East Hartford; John Michaels, Southbury; Dick Nassiff, Willimantic
1995: George Cocores, Middletown; Syd Conn, West Hartford; George Cruz, Hartford; Art Nelson, Plainville; Mike Marella, Bridgeport; John Pelletier, New London; Ron and Valerie Suhanosky, Milford
1996: Lou Bogash, Stratford; John Cesario, Hartford; Ralph Giansanti, South Windsor; Bill Heintz, Torrington; Julie Larese, Bristol; Frank Marietta, New Britain; Art Miller, Middlefield; Irene Smith, Manchester
1997: Thomas Altieri, Meriden; Lou Ernst, Niantic; Jim Foster, Wallingford; Bill Glynn, Middletown; Munere Haddad, Willimantic; Marty Paganini, Torrington; Bill Slater, Manchester
1998: Don Berger, Vernon; Bill Cahill, Durham; David Huntington, New Haven; Bob LaBrecche, South Windsor; John J. Murphy, Farmington; Karlene Sullivan, Suffield; Warren Whitehouse, East Lyme; Hubie Williamson, Waterbury
1999: Ed Beardsley, Bristol; Dick Gunn, Ellington; Bob LaBranche, Plainville; Herb Lawton, Wethersfield; Jim MacVeigh, Guilford; Bob McPhail, Norwich
2000: Paul Criscuolo, Branford; Steve Daniels, Southington; Dave Greenleaf, Bristol; Ken Hungerford, West Hartford; Stan Jablonski, Somers; Dick Teed, Windsor
2001: Dennis Beatty, New Britain; Richard Gano, Franklin/Willimantic; Mary Fuller and Cathi Rapp, Waterbury; Bill Hardy, Portland; Pete Kokinis, Wethersfield; Dr. Mike Lantieri, Southington; Bill Lynch, Windsor
2002: Fred Levesh, Guilford; Bill Ryan, Waterbury; Bill Sullivan, Norwich; George Tomalonis, Enfield; Bryan J. Treado III, Plainville; Bill Walsh, Windsor
2003: Marc Allard, Dayville; George DeMaio, North Branford/North Haven; Brother Robert Houlihan, Middletown; Peter Kiro, East Hartford/Manchester; Tom Sullivan, Guilford
2004: Bob Greenwood, West Haven; Ethel Maturo, Guilford; Don MacKenzie, Old Lyme; Bill Petit, Berlin; Ricky and Lisa Bottalico, and Ralph Giansanti
2005: George Burr, Shelton; Christopher Everone, West Haven; Mike McLaughlin, New London; Jody Sheeley, Norwich; Bob Watson, Bristol
2006: Tom Chiappetta, Norwalk; Robert Johnson, Hamden; Francis Mullins, Bristol; Dave Nowakowski, Jewett City; Larry Pelletier, Meriden; Ed Wilcox, Middletown
2007: Bill Donovan, Waterford; Don Longtin, Glastonbury; Dave Ruotolo, West Haven; Gary Moore, New Haven; Nick Koules, Stamford; Matt Fischer, Cheshire; Bob Russell, Madison
2008: Joe Arnone, New Britain; Frank and Sheila Beneski, Suffield; Jim Boice, Glastonbury; Robert Burns, Hamden; Charles Derbabian, New Haven; Francis X. Sweeney, Waterford; Peter Higgins, Hartford
2009: Tom Blake, West Haven; Willie Bousquet, Putnam; Harold "Hat" Fengar, Waterford; Jane and Mark Foss, Manchester; Roy Lawrence, eastern Connecticut; Darwin Shaw, New Britain; Carmine Vaccaro, Stamford.

Gruen's inspirational performances removed all questions

By Dave Solomon

New Haven Register

Five years ago, when Deb Gruen was a Hamden Hall senior checking out some of the finer universities in America, an Ivy League swimming coach respectfully said that with her disability, she wouldn't fit well with the team.

How wrong can somebody be? Gruen, now a Yale senior, was born with spina bifida — an imperfect enclosure of the spinal column that often results in paralysis. On land, she needs two canes to get around.

In the water, it's a different story. She may not have the speed of a swimmer who has full use of her legs, but among Paralympic swimmers, she's one of the best in the world.

She has set five world Paralympic records. She has the endurance to swim the 1,500 freestyle and the versatility to swim the 400-meter individual medley. She owns the world records in both.

By the way, she's smart, too. She was a finalist this year for a Rhodes Scholarship.

Is there any question she deserves the Bob Casey Courage Award, which the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance will bestow tonight?

Yale swimming coach Frank Keefe, who first saw Gruen when she was a pre-teen at the Hamden Hall day camp, says his first reaction was to feel pity. "Don't even go there," he warns. "She gets a lot of credit; she gets a lot of support; she gets no pity. That's not acceptable."

"She's been an inspiration. She can focus better than anyone I've got on the team now, she knows how to set goals and she's willing to make the sacrifices that are necessary to get to those goals. There's nothing that gets in her way. She makes up her mind that she's going to do something and goes after it."

Her dad Jeff, an associate professor in pediatric and investigative medicine and genetics, likened his

daughter's personality to a large steamship. "It takes about 10 or 20 miles to stop a big steamship," said her dad. "Maybe you nudge it to the left, nudge it to the right, but she has a mind of her own ... does her own thing. She's extraordinarily resourceful and extraordinarily resilient. She's also the most focused person I've ever known."

That applies beyond the pool. After competing in the 2008 world Paralympic Games in Beijing, where she earned the bronze medal in the 100-meter breaststroke, Gruen stayed to spend a semester at Peking University, though she barely spoke a word of Chinese.

"It was fabulous," she said. "I wanted the chance to immerse myself in Beijing, learn the culture, learn the language ... oh gee, that was hard ... and understand the people."

The payoff came last May at the Paralympic Games in Manchester, England. "No one ever talks to the Chinese team," she

said. "But I could finally speak Chinese. So we're in the ready room together and I walked up to the coach and said Ni-hoa (hello). And he looked at me in shock because this was the first time anyone from the American team had ever talked to them in Chinese. I started talking to (the athletes) and it was really fun."

"At first my team noticed, but then the Chinese started coming up to us and saying 'Good luck,' and doing fist bumps ... which was a totally new thing. Previously we would hang out with the British or the Australians and other English teams. But finally we could speak in Chinese and get to know a whole new group of people."

Gruen will be going overseas again this summer as a member of the U.S. team that will compete at the IPC Swimming Worlds in Eindhoven, Netherlands, in August.

Before that happens, Keefe hopes there's a different type

of honor in Gruen's future. He believes she should receive the Nellie Pratt Elliott Award, the most prestigious athletic award given to a senior female at Yale which combines athletics and scholarship.

"It'll be interesting to see if they give it to a non-scoring (in college meets) Paralympian," said Keefe. "I think it would be great for Yale to do something like that. She's been a great inspiration."

I think that I and my staff have benefited greatly from having her here at Yale. I used to think I knew what was going on because I dealt with Special Olympics for a while, but she's well beyond that. I don't think our kids realize what they've learned, just being associated with her. But it's got to get into your psyche somewhere ... why should I be complaining and moaning about not being able to do something ... look what Deb does. Once you get to know her even slightly, you can't help but admire her."



Yale University

would like to congratulate
senior swimmer

DEB GRUEN

on her

Bob Casey Courage Award

You are an inspiration to us all.



Healey wins Kolinsky Scholarship

By Bob Barton

Scholarship Committee Chairman

Tim Healey, a senior at Danbury High School, is the winner of the 2010 Bohdan Kolinsky Memorial Journalism Scholarship. He plans to attend Boston University.

The Kolinsky Scholarship, named for the longtime scholastic sports editor of the Hartford Courant who died in 2003, is awarded annually through a statewide competition to a high school senior who shows outstanding promise in sports journalism. It provides \$1,000 for the student's freshman year in college and can be renewed at higher amounts in later years if the student meets certain standards.

The program awarded a total of \$6,500 in aid this academic year.

Healey is the third Danbury student in six years to win the scholarship. The 2005 winner was Daniel Sass, now teaching English and journalism in Maryland after graduating from the University of Michigan. The 2008 winner, Amanda Montes de Oca, is a sophomore at the University of Connecticut.

Healey became sports editor of Hatters'



Tim Healey

Herald, the school newspaper, as a junior and was promoted this year to editor in chief. He is a member of the National Honor Society and the school's peer leadership program. As a junior he was captain of the junior varsity soccer team.

He is the son of Gerard and Cynthia Healey of Danbury.



The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference

would like to congratulate
all of tonight's award winners.

New Haven County Chapter National Football Foundation

Congratulates our members and friends



Sean Barker
Art McGinley
Award



Scott Burrell
Gold Key
Award



Tom Marcucci
High School Coach
of the Year



Joe Benanto
Gold Key
Award



The Rev. Owen Sanderson
Good Sport
Award



The National Football Foundation
and College Hall of Fame, Inc.



Marcucci the AD was wise to hire Marcucci the coach

By Bob Barton

When Tom Marcucci, athletic director at Notre Dame High in West Haven, learned that football coach John DeCaprio would retire after the 2008 season, the search for a successor was short.

Marcucci looked in a mirror.

There he saw a guy with 17 years of head coaching experience – at Notre Dame, of all places – who had won more than two-thirds of his games, had won a Class L state championship in 1991, had coached three other state finalists, and at 60 still had the urge to coach. Oh, and the guy was a Notre Dame alumnus.

Marcucci hired him. Great move.

In his first year back as head coach, all Marcucci did was post an 11-1 record, win another Class L title and earn the No. 1 ranking of every newspaper poll in

the state. That, together with his lifetime record as a coach and administrator at Notre Dame, made him the choice of the Connecticut Sports Writers' Alliance to receive the Doc McInerney Coach of the Year Award for boys' sports.

After Notre Dame outlasted Pomperaug of Southbury 28-21 for the 2009 championship on a snowy December Saturday, Marcucci was quick to deflect the praise onto his players. "There's something about the resiliency of these kids. We've had our backs to the wall so many times," Marcucci said. "It's not my story; it's their story."

The players could agree only partly. "He (Marcucci) deserves it as much as anyone out here," said Conor Keniry, who played wide receiver and defensive back and was the New Haven Register's state Player of the Year.



Marcucci

"He's so well-respected around the school," Keniry said. "He walks in the room and everyone shuts up. He's an old-school guy. I don't know much about old school, but he teaches you."

Justin Willis, a senior running

back, could offer some perspective on old school. "He pushed us no end, practicing in August in 100-degree heat," Willis said. "It was definitely different, but we knew something good was going to come of it. Being state champion wasn't in our minds at the beginning of the season, but now it's ours."

Turning a program around, after a 4-6 season in 2008, was old hat to Marcucci. When he became head coach the first time, in 1982, he also took over a team that had won four games the year before. He went 8-2 and followed up with a 9-2 season in '83.


He kept Notre Dame football going strong (119-53-6) through 1998, when he was offered the assistant principal's job, with the suggestion that he couldn't do that and coach too. Then in 2006 Joe Tonelli, then athletic director, stepped down and Marcucci

moved into that job.

Thus, when the football coaching position opened up, Marcucci knew all there was to know about it. "I interviewed myself for the job," Marcucci said. "... I looked in the mirror and said, 'Are you crazy?' Then my wife interviewed me, and she said I could do it." Their kids were grown. He had the time. Done deal.

The award he receives tonight will go on a crowded shelf. On Friday night the New Haven County chapter of the National Football Foundation gave him its Coach of the Year Award. He's received similar honors from the New Haven Gridiron Club and the Connecticut High School Coaches Association. The latter honored him for both football and baseball, in which he led Notre Dame to the Class LL title in 1985.


Any athletic director would be happy to hire a guy like that.



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**The Staples Gridiron Club congratulates
Buck Iannacone as the 2010 recipient
of the CSWA's John Wentworth
Good Sport Award.**

GOLD KEY
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Barker's commitment to CSWA rewarded with McGinley Award

By Bob Barton

Sean Barker didn't go to college intending to be a sports editor.

He was a sophomore majoring in business management at Franklin Pierce College in Rindge, N.H., when a fellow student was killed by a drunken driver. Barker wrote a story and submitted it to the college paper. An editor asked if he'd like to join the paper's staff.

By senior year, Barker says, "I was publisher, editor and sports editor. I became addicted to newspapers."

Graduating in 1991, he worked at the Evening Sentinel in Ansonia through 1992, then at the Connecticut Post in Bridgeport until November 1999, when he joined the New Haven Register as assistant sports editor. Promotion to sports editor came in March 2006.

At 40, he is already a past three-term president of the Connecticut

Sports Writers' Alliance and a past chairman of the Associated Press Sports Editors, Northeast Region.

He's covered pro football and UConn's 1999 national basketball champions, but says his most gratifying experiences have been covering high school and local college sports.

His Register sports sections have won a flock of awards, and tonight he adds a personal honor: the Art McGinley Award. Named for a sports editor of the now-defunct Hartford

Times, it honors an individual for meritorious service to the Alliance and the sports writing craft.

A Derby native and Shelton High alumnus, Barker says he's been a sports fan from his earliest years, thanks to his father, Jack, who held season tickets for Fairfield University basketball. Sean and his wife, Jennifer, have two children, Ethan, 9, and Emily, 4. Ethan already has been introduced to Yankee Stadium and Fairfield basketball.



ART MCGINLEY AWARD WINNERS

- 1976: Bill Lee, Hartford Courant
1977: Willard Williams, The (Norwalk) Hour
1978: Lou Black, Associated Press
1979: Hank O'Donnell, Waterbury newspapers
1980: Sam Cohen, Bridgeport Herald
1981: Bill Ahern, Jackson Newspapers
1982: Joe Cassano, Hartford Times
1983: Charles Kellogg, New Haven Register
1984: John DeGange, New London Day
1985: Earl Yost, Manchester Herald
1986: Fred J. Post, Middletown Press
1987: Frank Corkin, Meriden Record-Journal
1988: Don Clerkin, Hartford Times
1989: John Kershaw, Hartford Courant
1990: Bohdan Kolinsky, Hartford Courant
1991: Jack Cruise, The (New London) Day
1992: Lou Brodersen, The (Norwalk) Hour
1993: Fred Vercini, Bridgeport Post-Telegram
1994: Howard Holcomb, Hartford Courant
1995: Pat Drewry, Waterbury newspapers
1996: Bart Fisher, New Britain Herald
1997: Tom McCormack, New Haven Register
1998: Owen Canfield, Hartford Courant
1999: Mike Caruso, Hartford Courant/Hartford Times
2000: Hal Levy, Shore Line Newspapers
2001: Pete Zanardi, Hartford Times/



Bohdan Kolinsky

New Haven Register/Shore Line Newspapers

- 2002: Bob Barton, New Haven Register
2003: Matt Buckler, Manchester Journal Inquirer
2004: Tom Hine, Hartford Courant
2005: Bruce Berlet, Hartford Courant
2006: Randy Smith, Manchester Journal Inquirer
2007: Ted Moynihan, Meriden Record-Journal
2008: Woody Anderson, Hartford Courant
2009: Arnold Dean, WTIC-1080

Congratulations to the award winners

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WINNERS.



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Looking back at the 2009 Gold Key honorees



GOLD KEY
2010

PAST GOLD KEY WINNERS

1940: Connie Mack, baseball's Grand Old Man; Edward Reilly, Bridgeport Central High School basketball coach; Hubert Sedgewick, dean of state sports writers; Bobby Jones, golfing legend.

1941: Louis "Kid" Kaplan, world featherweight champion; Robert Pryde, state golf official; George Weiss, New York Yankees and Mets executive.

1942: Emmons "Chick" Bowen, Hillhouse (New Haven) High School coach; Gene Sarazen, golf immortal; Bill Slocum, New York sports writer.

1943-44: No awards because of World War II.

1945: Pete Foley, Naugatuck High School coach; Dan Parker, New York sports columnist; Ken Strong, New York Giants and New York University star.

1946: Joseph McCluskey, Olympic track star; Thomas M. Monahan, Bristol High School Coach; Ed Walsh, Hall of Fame pitcher.

1947: Jack Barry, Holy Cross College coach and American League shortstop; Bobby Grant, state golf champion; Raymond "Ducky" Pond, Yale football star and coach.

1948: Joseph E. Cronin, American League President and Hall of Fame shortstop; Dr. Frank Mongillo, New Haven physician; George Sparling, Brooklawn Country Club pro.

1949: Norm Daniels, Wesleyan University coach; Robert Kiphuth, Yale athletic director and swim coach; Ken Smith, New York sports writer.

1950: Larry Amann, Hartford Public High School coach; Albie Booth, Yale football star; George Mulligan, Waterbury sports promoter.

1951: Neal Ball, made baseball's first unassisted triple play; Ray Oosting, Trinity College athletic director; Red Rolfe, New York Yankees third baseman.

1952: Gustave "Gus" Broberg, Dartmouth basketball All-American; William J. Price, state athletic commissioner; Jack Rourke, Colgate trainer.

1953: Julius Boros, golfing great; Frank S. Hogan, New York district attorney; Danny Murphy, Philadelphia Athletics.

1954: Joe Dugan, American League third baseman; Dennis T. McMahon, state athletic commissioner; Nick Tronsky, duckpin bowler.

1955: Tim Cohane, Look Magazine sports editor; Hugh Greer, UConn basketball coach; Johnny Newell, Hartford Public High School coach.

1956: Tad Jones, Yale football coach; Frank McGowan, major and minor league outfielder and scout; Frank Ross, state golf champion.

1957: Charles Clare, state golf champion; Dr. John E. Stoddard, Meriden physician; Pete Wigren, Manchester High School coach.

1958: James E. Coogan, New Haven sports official; Dan Jessee, Trinity College football coach; Paul Kuczo, Stamford High School coach.

1959: Christopher "Bat" Battalino, world featherweight champion; J.O. Christian, UConn athletic director; Briggs Cunningham, prominent racing figure.

1960: Sam Bender, Hillhouse (New Haven) High School basketball coach; Edwin F. "Ted" Blair, Connecticut's "Mr. Yale"; John "Clipper" Smith, Notre Dame football player and coach.

1961: Willie Pep, world featherweight champion, Charlie Petrino, basketball official; Andy Robustelli, New York Giants' defensive end.

1962: George "Kiddo" Davis, major league outfielder; Maurice Podoloff, NBA commissioner; Frank "Spec" Shea, New York Yankees pitcher.

1963: Connie Donahue, Torrington High School coach; Arthur "Dutch" Forst, football official; Jordan Olivar, Yale football coach.

1964: Frank Barnikow, Meriden High School; Emil "Mim" Daddario, Wesleyan University football star; Ed Feustel, state bowling official.

1965: Joe Cosgrove, Eastern League outfielder; Bill O'Brien, New London High School coach; Steve Witkowski, Wesleyan University and U.S. Olympic trainer.

1966: Tom Callaghan, Windham High School coach; Jess Dow, Southern Connecticut State College coach; H.H. Mandly Jr., state amateur golf champion.

1967: Ralph Erickson, Loomis School athletic director; Harry Jacunski, Yale freshman football coach; Smokey Joe Wood, Boston Red Sox pitcher and Yale baseball coach.

1968: Joe Fontana, Southington High athletic director; John Kelley, marathon runner; Murray Murdoch, Yale hockey coach.

1969: Sam Hyman, Eastern League pitcher; Jimmy Lee, Crosby and Wilby (Waterbury) High Schools coach; Art McGinley, dean of sports writers; Bill Steinkraus, Olympic Gold Medal equestrian winner.

1970: Charles "Boots" Jarvis, Ansonia High School athletic director and coach; Nels Nitchman, U.S. Coast Guard Academy coach; J. Ray Ryan, chairman, Albie Booth Memorial Game.

1971: Moe Drabowsky, major league pitcher; Walter Kennedy, NBA commissioner; Nick Pietrosante, Detroit Lions and Notre Dame fullback.

1972: Steve Blass, Pittsburgh Pirates pitcher; Sumner Dole, UConn coach; Lindy Remigino, Olympic gold medal winner.

1973: Rev. Robert Keating, sportsman and pastor of St. Jude's Church in



The Gold Key Class of 2009, l-r, Tom Nevers, Ray Cieplik, Stan Ogrodnik and Brian Leetch join Alliance president Bob Ehalt.

Derby; Tom Kelley, Manchester High School coach; Floyd Little, Denver Broncos and Syracuse University running back.

1974: Joan Joyce, softball pitching great; Dick McAuliffe, major league infielder; John Merriman, U.S. Coast Guard Academy coach.

1975: Walt Dropp, UConn and Boston Red Sox first baseman; Dick Siderowf, state amateur golfer; Bob Skoronski, Green Bay Packers' star.

1976: Carmen Cozza, Yale football coach; Ray Legenza, Naugatuck High School baseball coach; George D. Ritchie, Wethersfield High School coach.

1977: John Egan, NBA and Providence College basketball player; Joe Gargan, Kingswood School (West Hartford) coach; William H. "Widdy" Neale, state golf official.

1978: Frank Crisafi, East Haven High School coach; Dee Rowe, UConn basketball coach; Frank "Porky" Vieira, University of New Haven baseball coach and Quinnipiac College basketball star.

1979: Arthur "Babe" Allen, Bulkeley (Hartford) High School three-sport coach; John "Whitey" Piurek, West Haven High School athletic director and baseball coach; Jerry Courville, state amateur golfer.

1980: Albie Loeffler, Staples (Westport) High School soccer coach; Bill Detrick, Central Connecticut State University basketball coach; Larry Panciera, UConn baseball coach.

1981: Salvatore "Red" Verderame, Wilbur Cross (New Haven) High School basketball coach; Dick Danielson, Manchester High School soccer coach; Otto Graham, U.S. Coast Guard Academy athletic director, NFL player and coach.

1982: Abie Grossfeld, Southern Connecticut State University gymnastics coach; Bertha Ragan Tickey, softball pitching great; Tony Apiso, New Britain High School football coach.

1983: Bob Saulsbury, Wilbur Cross (New Haven) High School basketball coach; John Toner, UConn athletic director; Bobby Valentine, major league baseball player.

1984: Lou DeFilippo, Derby High School football coach; Waino Fillback, Middletown High School three-sport coach; Thomas R. Monahan, Bristol schools athletic director.

1985: Ray McKenna, East Hartford sportsman; Larry McHugh, Xavier (Middletown) High School football coach; Andy Baylock, UConn baseball coach.

1986: Burt Kahn, Quinnipiac College basketball coach; Bill Loika, Central Connecticut State University football coach; Bernie O'Rourke, Middletown sportsman.

1987: Ivan Wood, Plainville High School coach and administrator; Marcia Dolan, amateur golfer; Hank Majlinger, Central Connecticut State University baseball coach.

1988: Brenda Reilly, Central Connecticut State University women's basketball coach; Calvin Murphy, professional basketball player; Joe Morrone, UConn men's soccer coach.

1989: Bill Holowaty, Eastern Connecticut State University baseball coach; Nick Zeoli, Wilton High School coach and athletic director; John Fontana, Southington High School baseball coach.

1990: Matthew "Pop" Shortell, Ansonia sportsman; Dom Perno, UConn basketball player and coach; Bob Steele, longtime WTIC Radio announcer.

1991: President George Bush, Yale baseball captain; Susan Saint James, supporter of Connecticut Special Olympics; Patricia O'Sullivan Lucey, state amateur golf champion; Wally Camp, Coginchaug (Durham) High School

basketball coach and athletic director.

1992: Gordie Howe, NHL Hall of Famer; Lowell Lukas, Central Connecticut State University golf coach; Herb Kenny, Wesleyan University men's basketball coach.

1993: Charlie Sharos, South Windsor High School basketball coach/athletic director; Dave Bike, Sacred Heart University men's basketball coach; Tracy Claxton, former high school and collegiate basketball standout from New Haven.

1994: Barbara Young, amateur golf champion; Bill Rodgers, Boston Marathon winner; Dan Sullivan, Windsor Locks High School three-sport coach.

1995: Donna Lopiano, Women's Sports Foundation executive director; Joe Buzas, minor league baseball owner in Connecticut; Don Miller, Trinity College football; Bruce Hutchinson, Southern Connecticut State University swimming coach.

1996: Howie Dickenman, Central Connecticut State University men's basketball coach; Edna Fraser, Milford High three-sport coach and administrator; Earl Lavery, Fairfield Prep football coach; John Williamson, pro basketball player from New Haven.

1997: Lou Bazzano, Bulkeley High School basketball coach and Hartford schools' athletic director; Lida Tingley, amateur golf champion; Jerry McDougall, Trumbull High School football coach and athletic director; Joe Vancisin, Yale University basketball coach.

1998: Jack Arute Sr., owner of Stafford Motor Speedway; Paul "Frosty" Francis, retired executive director of the International Association of Approved Basketball Officials; Vito Montelli, St. Joseph High School boys basketball coach and athletic director; Dr. William Moore, commissioner of the New England Collegiate Conference and former Central Connecticut State University athletic director.

1999: C. Donald Cook, Sacred Heart University athletic director; Ken Kezer, New Britain High School baseball coach; Bill O'Brien, commissioner of the Southern Connecticut Conference and New Haven area sportsman; Fay Vincent Jr., Major League Baseball Commissioner.

2000: Bob DeMayo, North Haven High Baseball Coach; Tony DiCicco of Wethersfield, U.S. Women's World Cup Soccer championship team coach; Bob Dikranian, Southern Connecticut men's soccer coach; Bob Kay, golf professional, golf professional emeritus at Wampanoag Country Club in West Hartford.

2001: Geno Auriemma, UConn Womens Basketball Coach; Frank Robinson, Jr., Hall-West Hartford Football Coach; Jean Hunt, Farmington High Field Hockey Coach; Dr. Rich Diana, All-America Running Back at Yale.

2002: Inv Black, New Britain High track and field coach; Walter Luckett, Connecticut and New England boys basketball scoring champ from Bridgeport; Jennifer Rizzotti, University of Hartford women's basketball coach and UConn All-American; Charlie Sticka, Trinity College football All-American.

2003: Rico Brogna, retired Major League Baseball player from Watertown; Jim Calhoun, UConn men's basketball coach; Don Hoenig, professional golfer and Thompson Speedway owner; Mike Savage, Executive Director of the Connecticut Association of Schools and Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference.

2004: Rebecca Lobo, UConn women's basketball; Bob McKee, Conard High of West Hartford football, baseball and wrestling coach; Gene Reilly, Bulkeley High and Central Connecticut State University basketball standout, Portland High basketball coach; Corny Thompson, basketball standout for Middletown High, UConn.

2005: Jake Salafia, who coached Cromwell High to seven Class S state basketball titles; University of Bridgeport's Bruce Webster, New England winningest NCAA Division II basketball coach; Bill Mignault of Ledyard High, the state's winningest high school football coach.

2006: Ron Francis, Hartford Whaler All-Star; Charles Smith, Warren Harding High, University of Pittsburgh and NBA basketball standout; Dave Strong, Masuk coach and the state's winningest girls' sport coach; Judy Deeb, East Lyme High softball coach.

2007: Deborah Chin, University of New Haven coach and Director of Athletics; James O'Neill, New London High and Waterford High coach and administrator, American Legion baseball coach; Walter "Doc" Hurley, Weaver High School; Charlie Bentley, Warren Harding of Bridgeport basketball coach.

2008: Ted May, professional golf administrator and patron; Tony Falzarano, Putnam High boys basketball coach; Ralph King, Brien McMahon High (Norwalk) coach and administrator.

2009: Brian Leetch, NHL Hall of Famer; Stan Ogrodnik, Trinity College men's basketball coach; Ray Cieplik, athletic director at the Coast Guard Academy; Tom Nevers, Eastern Connecticut State University and Hale-Ray soccer coach.

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Hernandez catches another award for his collection

By Zac Boyer
 Hartford Courant

Aaron Hernandez left Connecticut in 2006 with the hope of finding bigger and better challenges while playing football at the University of Florida.

Mission accomplished.

Hernandez, 20, from Bristol, is the 2009 Bill Lee Male Athlete of the Year Award winner. That's the latest trophy in a collection that also includes the John Mackey Award as the nation's top collegiate tight end and the Connecticut Player of the Year award given by the Walter Camp Football Foundation.

"I feel like it was the best decision I made," Hernandez said of attending Florida. "It made me grow up a little bit, get away from family and friends. The coaches were great coaches and they were great people, and I just don't think anything could have gone better."

Hernandez broke from a family precedent in choosing to play at Florida. His

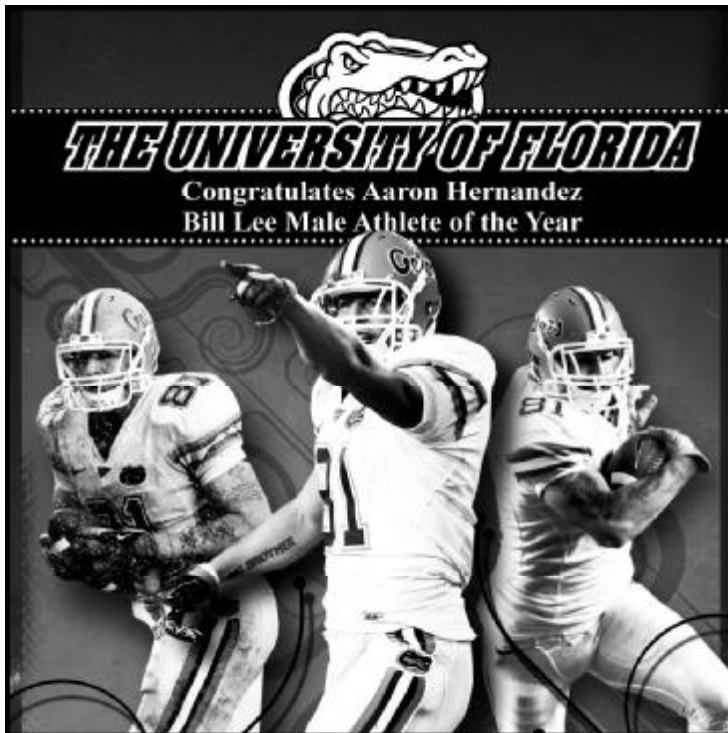
father, Dennis, lettered for the Huskies in 1976, while his older brother D.J. was a quarterback and wide receiver from 2005-08.

A USA Today All-American, Hernandez originally expected to play at UConn himself. He offered an oral commitment to the school in July 2005, before his junior year at Bristol Central High. But a trip to Florida nine months later led him to believe that the Gators would be the right fit.

The decision paid off. Hernandez played often as a freshman, won the Bowl Championship Series title with the Gators as a sophomore and led all Southeastern Conference tight ends in receptions, receiving yards and receiving yards per game as a junior.

He was selected in the NFL draft this weekend.

"Being in a position to fulfill your dream and play in the NFL is just something I know he's worked really hard for," D.J. Hernandez said, "and I was really proud of him to take each step closer to reaching that dream."



**The Fairfield County Sports Commission
 congratulates 4 of our own for their
 outstanding achievements.**

Joe Benanto - Shelton, 2009 FC Sports Hall of Fame

Rachele Fico - Monroe, 2008 Monroe Sports Person of Year

John Tartaglio - Fairfield University, 2007 Chelsea Cohen Courage Award

Buck Iannacone - Westport



www.fairfieldcountysports.com

GOLD KEY
2010

Milford's Tartaglio has worked hard to get back up

By Sean Barker
New Haven Register

They told John Tartaglio Jr. he would never walk again after a rare bacterial disease forced doctors to amputate both of his legs and his left bicep in August, 2004.

Just more than five years later, on Nov. 1, 2009, shortly after 10 p.m., Tartaglio crossed the finish line at the New York City Marathon.

It took the 22-year old Milford resident 16 hours to become the first amputee on both sides to complete a 26.2 mile run without the aid of a wheelchair.

That shouldn't have surprised anyone who knows John, a recipient of the Bob Casey Courage Award tonight.

He said he would walk to receive his high school diploma from Foran

High School, and he did.

He said he would become the first double amputee to finish a 5K road race, and he did. Then a 10K and finally a 70.2 mile Half Iron Man triathlon, a day after his birthday no less.

"Honestly, it has definitely been a situation where I've kept having support pushing me forward," said Tartaglio, a motivational speaker who graduated with a degree in pre-med from Fairfield University last May. "I've had a lot of good people around me. Once I did that first lap around the track, my head kind of switched to a different mode, where I believed I could do a lot more stuff than at the beginning."

It took 4½ months for Tartaglio to be fitted for his prosthetics.

Five months later he took that lap around the track.

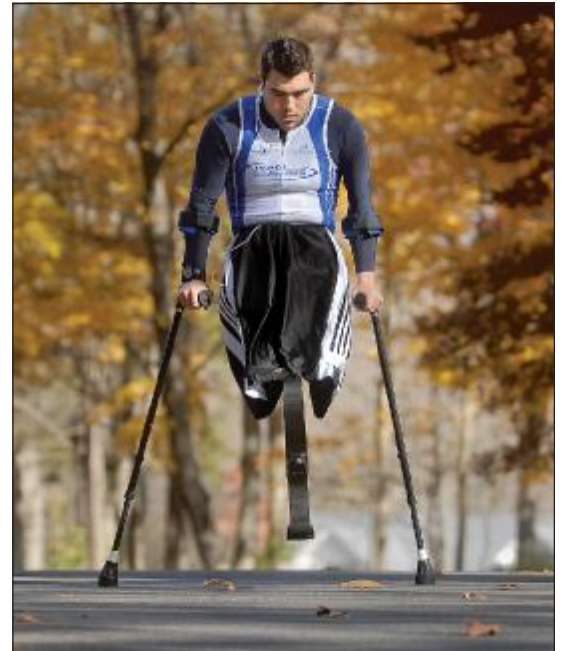
Tartaglio is a motivational speaker with his own web site, john Tartaglio.com. The message on the web site: "How Far You Fall Doesn't Determine Who You Are, It's How Hard You Work To Get Back Up."

He speaks to companies and sports teams and youth.

"When I am speaking, the main message basically is not to give up and to believe in yourself and what you can do," said Tartaglio, who played football and baseball in high school. "And my main thing with kids is that with work and dedication you can accomplish what you want in this life."

Tartaglio recently ran another 10K road race. He stays in shape by biking or swimming or running a few miles per day.

He hopes to attend graduate or medical school.



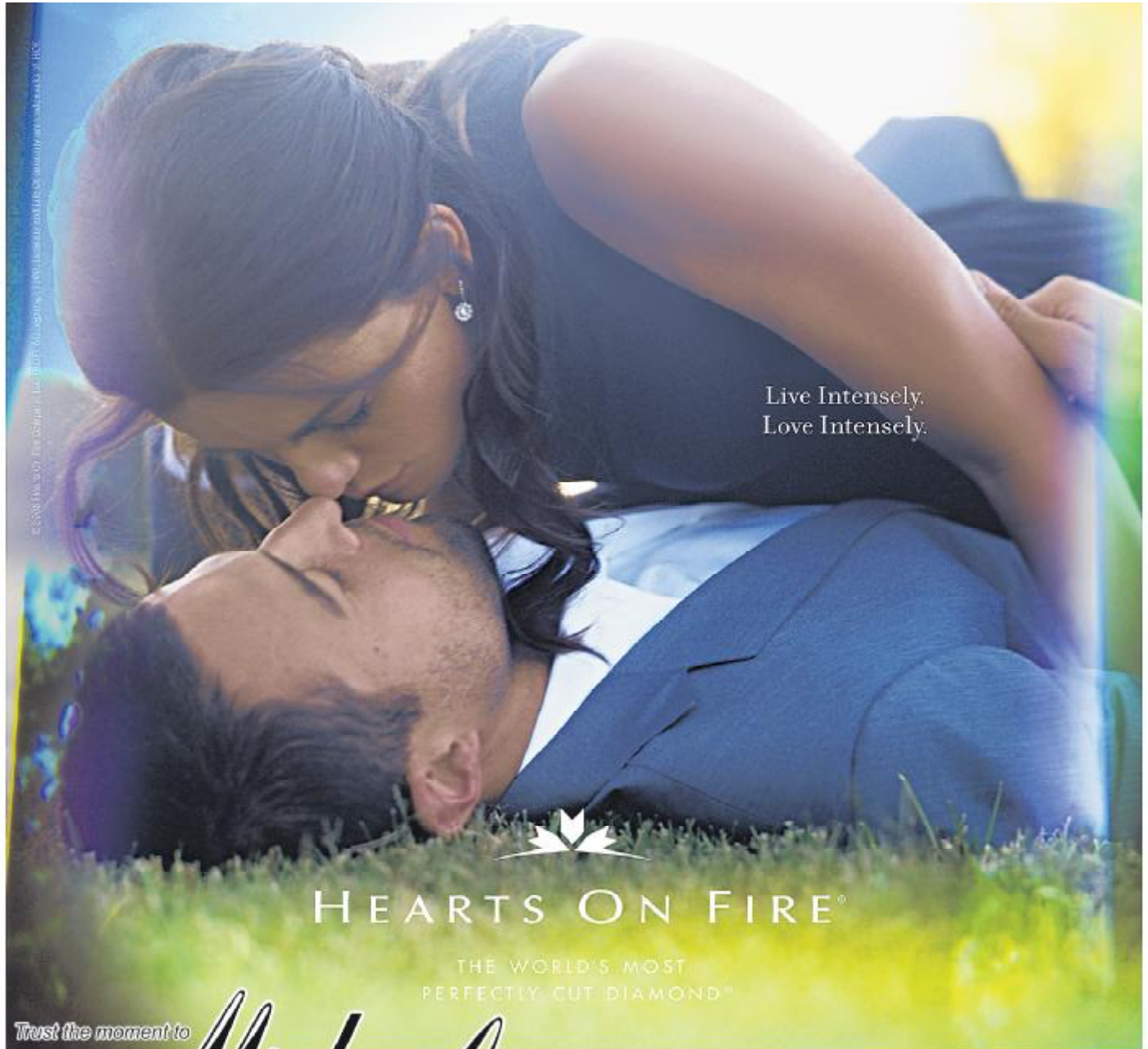
Trinity College would like to congratulate the Bantam men's squash team on its historic 12th consecutive national intercollegiate championship title.

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A romantic couple is shown in a close embrace, nearly kissing, in a sunlit grassy field. The woman is leaning over the man, who is lying on his back. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall mood is intimate and romantic.

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The New Haven Register staff congratulates
Sports Editor Sean Barker
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“We’ve tried paper training him, but he still won’t give us the sports section.”



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