

25th Annual Minnesota Girls and Women in Sports Day

20 athletes and sports leaders to be recognized

Tuesday, February 1 – 12 p.m. at the Minnesota State Capitol

Some of Minnesota's most inspiring and influential student-athletes, coaches and athletic leaders will be recognized at an award ceremony on Tuesday, February 1, at the Minnesota State Capitol in St. Paul. The award ceremony will be conducted in conjunction with the 25th annual National Girls and Women in Sports Day, a nationwide celebration recognizing the accomplishments of individuals in the promotion and advancement of girls' and women's sports. The 2011 ceremony will be honoring 20 individuals who will be receiving awards in five separate categories. Award recipients are nominated by schools, community organizations, recreation centers, and amateur and professional sports organizations. All are invited to attend this special event. Details about award winners are below.



The Marie Berg Award for Excellence in Education - Marie Meyer, Braham HS. Meyer has been a pioneer and role model for girls at Braham High School for over 30 years. She has taught physical education and coached volleyball, basketball and track in addition to serving as the Director of Athletics for 24 years. Meyer is credited for starting the Braham Volleyball invitational in 1976, an event still held annually. She also organized a 25th anniversary celebration of girls sports at Braham High. She was the first female to receive the Class A Athletic Director of the Year Award in 1992 and was inducted into the Minnesota Volleyball Coaches Hall of Fame in 2002 and the Braham Athletic Hall of Fame in 2005. She served as Sub-Section Coordinator for the Minnesota State High School League for 30 years, a position she retired from this past fall. As a student-athlete, Meyer had the opportunity to play on the inaugural intercollegiate volleyball, basketball and softball teams at St. Cloud State University in 1968.



The Girls' and Women's Sports in the Media Award - Charles Hallman, Minnesota Spokesman-Reporter. Hallman is currently a Staff Writer/Columnist for the *Minnesota Spokesman Recorder* and previously served as the Senior Editor for *Insight News* and as a Reporter for *KMOJ-FM*, Minneapolis. Hallman has reported on girls and women in sport for over two decades. He believes that females in athletics deserve the same reporting zeal and maximum focus in their highs and lows, successes and disappointments as he gives men's sports. Hallman has even been known to give more attention to women's sports, female athletes and gender equity issues because he believes it is the right thing to do, and is one of the reasons why he became a journalist -- to give voice to those who don't always get their voice heard in an equitable fashion. He is proud to be a small part of the recognition of girls and women's sports over the years, not only locally but on a national scale as well.



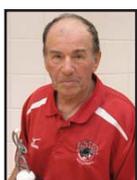
The Wilma Rudolph Award for Courage and Inspiration - Michele Heise, Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf. Heise is currently a 2nd/3rd Grade Teacher at Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf (MSAD) and has served as volleyball, basketball and track coach. She recently was selected as National Deaf Volleyball Coach of Year and her team was selected as National Deaf Team of Year, their 4th consecutive honor. Heise coached the MSAD volleyball team to 15 Great Plains Schools for the Deaf Championships, including nine straight. Her teams earned three straight Eastern Minnesota Athletic Conference Championships and currently boast a 44 game conference winning streak. Heise has earned numerous accolades, both as a player and as a coach. Highlighting her playing honors are Gold Medals in the 1989 Deaf Olympics and 1999 USA Pan American Games in women's basketball, and a Silver Medal at the Deaf Olympics in Rome, Italy in 2001 for USA Women's Handball. Heises is a member of the MSAD Hall of Fame and in 2009 was named the NDIAA Coach of the Year.



Special Merit Award - Evie Erdman, Elysian. Erdman is currently employed as a Scholarship Program Manager at Scholarship America in Saint Peter, Minn. Erdman has been a true leader in the gymnastics community in Minnesota for over 40 years. In a coaching capacity, she has worked with teams at New Ulm Turners, Mankato State University and Gustavus Adolphus College. Since 1980, she has focused her energies on officiating gymnastics at the high school and collegiate levels and has helped hundreds of students receive their Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) gymnastics official rating. Erdman has worked as a MSHSL official for nearly 40 years, while also serving as a MSHSL rules clinician for the past 25 years. As a meet organizer, Erdman has served as the director for numerous state and regional competitions including the National Collegiate Gymnastics Associations (NCGA) National Championships in 1990 and 2002. Erdman is a member of the Gustavus Athletic Hall of Fame.



Special Merit Award - Gretchen Koehler, Gustavus Adolphus College. Koehler is one of the most beloved coaches in the history of the Gustavus Adolphus College women's athletics program where she brought a great sense of humor, balanced perspective, and passion to hundreds of young women in a coaching career that spanned nearly 30 years. Koehler taught in the physical education department and served as head coach of the volleyball, basketball, softball, and tennis teams. While she was successful in all her coaching endeavors, Koehler experienced the most success with the volleyball program, where she compiled an all-time record of 548-353-10 and when she retired from coaching in 1996, she ranked as the fifth-winningest coach in the history of Division III volleyball. She was the first women's sport coach at Gustavus to take a team to the national tournament and claimed four conference titles during her tenure. Koehler is a member of two Hall of Fames and has served as a regional and national speaker at AAHPERD conventions.



Special Merit Award - Milan Mader, Lakeville North High School. Mader currently teaches Physical Education at Century Middle School and is the Head Volleyball and Gymnastics Coach at Lakeville North and the Assistant Boys Track Coach at Lakeville South. He has devoted his life to coaching young women, impacting the lives of young people with a coaching career spanning more than 40 years. During his coaching career, he has led teams in volleyball, gymnastics, track and field and soccer. His volleyball teams have made 14 Minnesota State Tournament appearances, including a 2010 4A State Championship. His Gymnastics teams have made 15 state appearances, winning an unprecedented ten championships, including a six consecutive year unbeaten streak. Mader has been inducted into the Minnesota State Coaches Hall of Fame in both volleyball and gymnastics and is a member of the Univ. of Minn. and Lakeville Athletic Halls of Fames. Mader is a native of the Czech Republic, where he was a distance runner, competing as a member of the Czech National Team, winning the National Cross Country Championship in 1964.



Special Merit Award - Kristina Koznick-Landa. Koznick, a native of Burnsville, began skiing competitively when she was 7 years old at Buck Hill Ski Area. Soon after she joined a ski-racing program. Koznick's coaches recognized her talent and although she had only been racing for one year, recommended that she join the US Ski Association program. For the next four years, Koznick trained at Buck Hill, guided by Austrian-American Erich Sailer and his team of dedicated coaches. Koznick, a three-time Olympic team member, will go down in history as one of America's most decorated female World Cup slalom racers, with five National Slalom titles, 20 World-Cup podium finishes, and six World Cup wins. Koznick recently retired from professional racing, and currently runs her own ski business out of Vail and Aspen, Colorado working with corporate groups and families to make their ski days as exhilarating as possible.

2011 Breaking Barriers Awards

Jim Berbee	Juli Seydell Johnson	Eagan Parks and Recreation
Amy Bassett-Brevik	Gary Johnston	Rogers Girl's Hockey
Patricia "Pat" Burns	Megan Magnuson	Rochester Swimming & Diving Coach
Robyn Ruschmeier Courchane	Martha Nause	Men's & Women's Golf Coach, Macalester College
Fatimah Hussein	Amy Northrop	Pine Island Girl's Basketball
Jenny Johnson	Robert Riley	Fowell Park Girls Basketball Coach
Marty Knight		

*Minnesota Girls and Women in Sports Day is sponsored by the Minnesota Coalition of Women in Athletic Leadership.
For more information about the event contact: Kelly Anderson Diercks - diercks@augsbury.edu - (612)-330-1245.*