



The Purest Form of Sport



Annual Report 2018-19

History of the RIIL

March 9, 1899: A meeting was held with delegates from Cranston High School, Hope High School, East Providence High School and Classical High School to state their ideas as to the advisability of forming a league. On a motion made and carried, the league was formed by the schools represented and officers were elected.

A committee was elected to draw up articles of agreement, and Article 1 named the association The Interscholastic League. In all, 15 articles of agreement were discussed by section and adopted.

The first recognized sport was baseball, and the member schools were asked to develop the schedule. On June 13, 1899, the Interscholastic League awarded Classical High School the Baseball Championship of the 1899 season.

September 29, 1899: Manual Training High School, Providence English High School and Pawtucket High School were admitted to membership. In addition, the committee approved a football season. The football schedule was approved, and the first football game was held on October 13, 1899 between Cranston High School and East Providence High School, with East Providence prevailing, 5-0. The Spalding Football Rules were adopted. East Providence High School was awarded the first Football Championship.

January 23, 1900: The Board of Directors moved and seconded that the sport of polo be accepted. Hope St. High School was awarded the first Polo Championship in 1900.

February 23, 1900: The Board of Directors voted to approve **five eligibility rules** to be applied to all League Athletics:

- No professionals were allowed to participate
- The Board of Directors would investigate all eligibility matters
- Five years of eligibility for each player
- There was a transfer rule
- Penalty for violations was forfeiture



May 5, 1900: The league approved the Interscholastic Field Athletic Meet (track & field). Classical High School was awarded the first Field Day Championship.

January 1901: The Board of Directors voted mandating that all member schools submit a list of eligible athletes in all sports.

December 16, 1901: Woonsocket High School was admitted to the Interscholastic League.

December 2, 1902: The Board of Directors voted to allow the league to arrange for a hockey season. Hope St. High School was awarded the first Hockey Championship for the 1903 season.

March 1904: The Board of Directors voted to approve the National League Baseball Rules with the exception of the foul strike.

Initial League Issues:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| * Uneven competition | * Few suitable playing surfaces |
| * Lack of eligibility standards | * No professional preparation for coaches |
| * Organization | * Officials were usually chosen from the crowd |
| * Spectator riots, mob scenes.... | * If the home team lost – the visiting team was stoned out of town |

1928: A group of high school principals became interested in forming an organization which would control and administer athletics as one of its objectives.

1932: The R.I. Secondary School Principals' Association was organized, defining its objectives as follows: *Its object shall be to raise the standards of the secondary schools of RI and to advance the professional interests of the members of this association.*

Committees were established: * R.I. Honor Society * Relations with the Office of the R.I. State Director of Education * Athletics

March 1932: The Interscholastic League was formally organized as it is today. It was organized to meet the expressed needs of high schools for a functional sports program that would be governed by a committee of principals.

1952: The RIIL joined the National Federation of State High School Associations.

Today: Now in its 118th year of existence, the R.I. Interscholastic League is governed by the Principals' Committee on Athletics, and its 72 member schools.

Greetings from the RIIL

Dear Friends,

Throughout my years of serving the member schools of the RIIL, I am continually amazed and appreciative of the dedication and passion exhibited by the hundreds of administrators, athletic directors, coaches and officials who are responsible for contributing to the success of our student-athletes and our athletic programs. You continue to make a difference.

As we approach another event-filled year, my wish for each and everyone is to enjoy the journey and remember what a privilege it is for us to play a role in the lives of young people. Never doubt for a moment that you make a difference in the lives of your students. Something we say and something we do this year will impact the life of a student. Let us all strive to make it a positive impact and to enjoy the journey along the way.

Have a great school year and thank you for what you do!



Thomas A. Mezzanotte

Executive Director, Rhode Island Interscholastic League

As Chairman of the Principals' Committee on Athletics (PCOA), I am proud to serve along with Vice-Chair Mr. Daniel Warner and the other members of the committee representing the member schools of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League (RIIL). The PCOA is the governing body of the RIIL and we are committed to providing the students of Rhode Island with high quality education based athletics.

Our student athletes represent exactly what educational based athletics is all about. Through competition in its purest form, our students are learning life lessons in areas like teamwork, communication, perseverance, problem solving, and goal setting; all skills that will serve them throughout their future lives. They represent our schools and communities and serve as a source of immense pride. Long after the seasons end, we hope our students remember the bonds formed and lessons learned on the courts and fields, and hopefully, the fun they experienced competing with their friends.

The RIIL is a dynamic organization of member schools that strives to keep the interest of the student athlete at the heart of its decision making process. Through the dedication and hard work of RIIL Executive Director Mr. Thomas Mezzanotte, Assistant Executive Director Mr. Michael Lunney, and the talented office staff, our league continues to experience tremendous success and unprecedented growth. Along with Mr. Warner, Mr. Mezzanotte, Mr. Lunney, and the entire PCOA, I welcome your feedback and input. Remember, we are a league of Principals and member schools, have a great school year and I look forward to working with everyone.

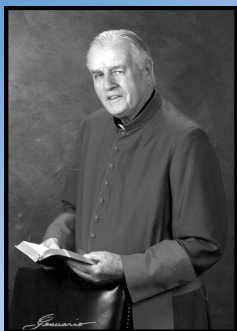


Sean T. Kelly

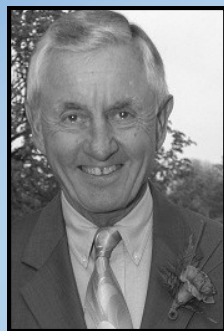
Chairman, Principals' Committee on Athletics

Principal, Cranston High School East

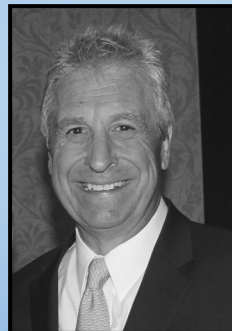
R.I. Interscholastic League Executive Directors Past and Present . . .



Msgr. Robert C. Newbold
Executive Director, RIIL
1969-1994



Richard B. Lynch
Executive Director, RIIL
1994-2004



Thomas A. Mezzanotte
Executive Director, RIIL
2004-Present



RIIL Mission

Who we are: The Rhode Island Interscholastic League was established in 1899. It is a voluntary, private, incorporated, non-profit organization of principals who pledge their high schools and participants to follow the Rules and Regulations of the League. There are 73 public, private, parochial, alternative education and charter high schools that make up the membership. The RIIL sponsors championships in 31 sports and activities. More than 35,000 young men and women compete annually in thousands of competitions. The purpose of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League is to supervise and administer the athletic programs, contests, schedules and matters related to participating schools in the state of Rhode Island.

Core Beliefs and Values: Athletics is an integral part of education in our schools • Interscholastic athletics is a privilege that enhances the education of students • Leadership, responsibility, sportsmanship and scholarship are essential parts of athletics • Athletics is an enjoyable experience which fosters valuable life lessons • All member schools have the opportunity to be represented and are accountable to the standards of the RIIL • Fostering a professional relationship among its colleagues is a responsibility of the RIIL.

Vision: The RIIL is an organization with high standards for its member schools, student athletes, and constituencies. Through professional collegiality the League advocates and promotes the value of interscholastic athletics. The League provides athletic experiences that enable student athletes to reach their highest level of academic and athletic potential and prepares them to become responsible citizens.

Mission: The mission of the Rhode Island Interscholastic League is to provide its member schools governance, leadership and support for interscholastic athletics which gives student athletes opportunities to compete in an environment that stresses education, sportsmanship, integrity and safety.

Governing Process of the RIIL

The legislative body of the League is the ***Principals' Committee on Athletics***, which consists of principals/assistant principals of the 73 member high schools. The Committee meets regularly. All meetings are open to the public and anyone who wishes may attend. Standing Committees are appointed by the Chairperson of the Principals' Committee on Athletics with the approval of the Principals' Committee on Athletics. Standing Committees are established for each sport. Sport committees are established to address issues of general concern to the RIIL membership, alignment and to plan programs/activities for the members. The following administrators served on the Principals' Committee on Athletics during the 2018-2019 school year:

Kevin J. McNamara, Chairperson, Principal, Lincoln High School

Sean T. Kelly, Assistant Chairperson, Principal, Cranston High School East

Thomas Barbieri

Principal, Cranston West High School

Scott D. Barr

Principal, Classical High School

Christopher Cobain

Athletic Director, East Greenwich High School/ RIIAAA

Joseph B. Goho

Principal, North Providence High School

Colleen Gribbin

Principal, St. Mary-Bay View

Gerald Habershaw

Principal, Pilgrim High School

Donald J. Kavanagh

Principal, La Salle Academy

Michaela Keegan, Ed.D.

Principal, Blackstone Valley Mayoral Prep

Gail Ponte

Principal, Middletown High School

Michael Sollitto, Ed.D.

Superintendent, Burrillville Schools / RISSA

Philip Solomon

Principal, West Warwick High School

Shani Wallace

Principal, East Providence High School

Daniel F. Warner

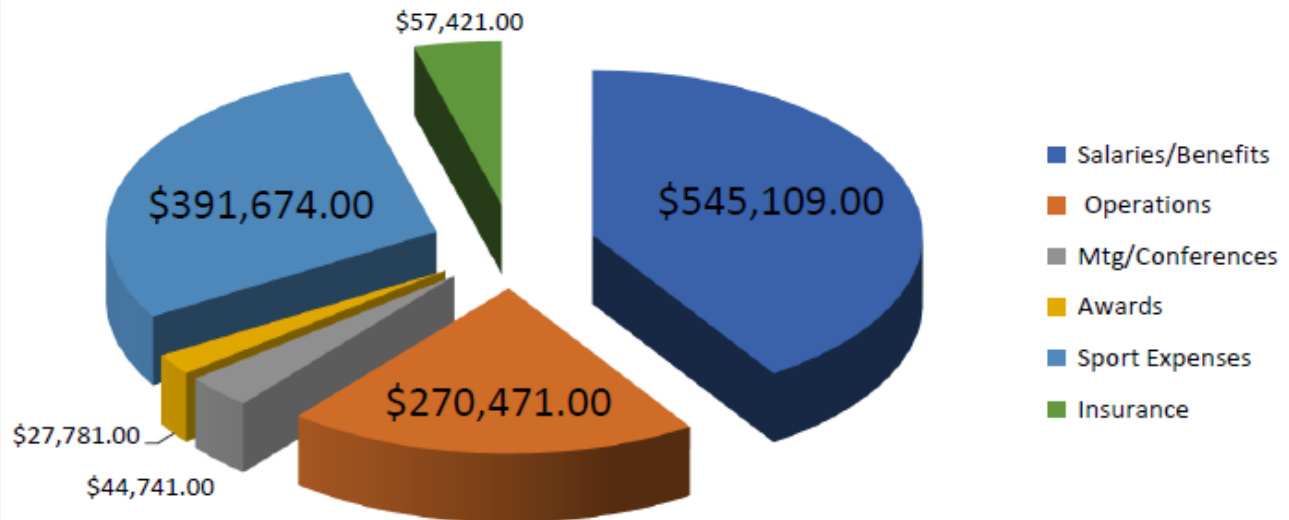
Principal, Narragansett High School

Michael Whaley, Ed.D.

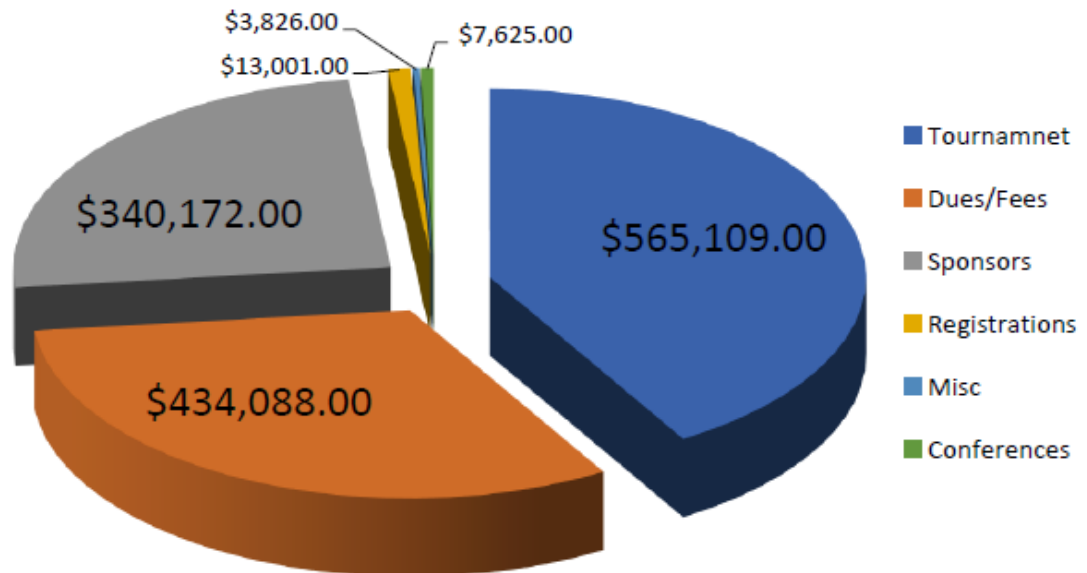
Principal, Burrillville High School

Financial Report

Expenses 2018-2019



Revenue 2018-2019



Services to Member Schools

The Rhode Island Interscholastic League is a service organization providing its member schools with publications, training opportunities, recognition programs, tournaments, rules interpretation meetings and other services that assist in the administration of interscholastic sports.

♦ Athletic Rules and Regulations

Enforces the by-laws and regulations for the RIIL.

♦ Recognition

The RIIL recognizes and congratulates the accomplishments of numerous athletes, teams, coaches, Athletic Directors and administrators.



♦ Official Pay Program

Through the Arbitrator Ref Pay Program, the RIIL will streamline, improve and assist school Athletic Directors and Business Offices in the assignment and payment of game officials.

♦ Computer Management Program

Tool that will upgrade and improve information for all RIIL fans. In addition, it will streamline all RIIL management functions for school Athletic Directors and coaches.

♦ Support the Needs of the RIAAA

Every two years, the RIIL and the RIAAA conduct an extensive and objective process of aligning teams in all sports. This process serves to provide competitive balance among all teams in all sports.

♦ Tournaments

The League supervises and administers state tournaments in 30 athletic events for its member schools. The RIIL assists the media outlets statewide in their coverage of high school sports.

♦ Student Leadership Conferences

The League sponsors numerous opportunities for student athletes to take part in an assortment of leadership and sportsmanship activities, such as the New England Student Leadership Conference and NFHS National Student Leadership Summit.

♦ RIIL WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA

We continue to upgrade and improve the riil.org website, which features a new homepage, as well as online statistics in the sports of football, hockey, baseball, soccer and basketball. RIIL Director of Multimedia Content Carolyn Thornton is an experienced journalist who oversees the league's Twitter, Instagram and Facebook pages, as well as the RIIL Blog. These social media platforms allow the RIIL to inform parents and student-athletes about important RIIL initiatives, provide real-time updates on RIIL events and happenings and share the accomplishments of member schools.

♦ RIIL/NFHS Network

The heart of the RIIL/NFHS Network primarily consists of the season-ending RIIL Sport Tournaments. The RIIL/NFHS Network has produced internet broadcasts for most sports during the past 4 years of operation. The NFHS Network School Broadcasting Program gives all of our schools and communities the opportunity to highlight our programs, our fans and our athletes. It is for all these reasons that the RIIL encourages every Rhode Island high school to become part of this great opportunity.



Overview of 2018-19 School Year

RIIL “DRIVER SAFETY IS A TEAM SPORT” PROGRAM

Through a grant from the R.I. Department of Transportation, the RIIL joined RIDOT in its mission to reduce the number of traffic crashes and fatalities in the State of Rhode Island through highway safety awareness. Student-athletes were encouraged to take an online Traffic Safety Pledge, and messages delivered on RIIL social media and at RIIL events focused on Occupant Safety, Impaired Driving, Speed and Distracted Driving.



ESPORTS

The RIIL was one of five NFHS-member state associations and one affiliate group that took part in the inaugural esports season, an initiative launched in the Fall of 2018 through a partnership with the National Federation of State High School Associations, the NFHS Network and PlayVS. The RIIL esports league consisted of 26 teams representing 13 schools with a total of 159 players competing. Season Zero, which featured the five-player team game “League of Legends,” ran from Oct. 30 to Dec. 11 and culminated with a single-elimination playoff bracket in January 2019 to determine a state champion. The Hextech Hawks of Bishop Hendricken won the inaugural RIIL Esports State Championship, defeating Mt. St. Charles Academy, 2-1, in the title match, held Jan. 27 at Providence College.

Season One ran from Feb. 25-April 22 and featured 19 League of Legends teams representing 11 schools and 13 Rocket League teams representing 9 schools. The online finals were streamed on Twitch and the NFHS Network. Bishop Hendricken’s Hextech Hawks again defeated Mt. St. Charles, 2-1, to win the Spring League of Legends Championship. The North Providence NP Rocket Cougars were crowned the Rocket League Champions, defeating the Bishop Hendricken Broad-wings, 6-3.



UNIFIED SPORTS

The RIIL and R.I. Special Olympics began a partnership to establish a Unified Basketball League in 2010, followed soon after by a Unified Volleyball League. Unified Basketball has since grown to include 38 high school teams, while there are 25 high school teams competing in Unified Volleyball. Unified Sports® in RIIL



member schools, creates an inclusive environment where everyone benefits. Unified Sports® combines people with intellectual disabilities (called athletes) and without intellectual disabilities (called partners) on sports teams for training and competition. The athletes experience new social opportunities and make new friends they may not have otherwise. The partners describe their mentorship role as being equally rewarding. Many parents and siblings also find that Unified Sports® offers a new way to spend time together and meet other families.

Using sports to help break down barriers that have historically kept people apart, Unified Sports® promotes meaningful inclusion and acceptance of people with intellectual disabilities in the community. In fact, 93% of partners say they gained a better understanding of their teammates through Unified Sports®.



Overview of 2018-19 School Year

SHOWCASE CINEMAS TEAM OF THE WEEK, TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

SHOWCASE Cinemas continued as the presenting sponsor of Team of the Week, recognizing outstanding efforts and contributions RIIL student-athletes are making on and off the playing fields. Chosen winners selected from a pool of nominations weekly, recorded radio shout-outs played on air on Hot 106, 92.3PRO-FM and Lite Rock 105 and received SHOWCASE movie passes. Winning storylines ranged from teamwork, support, unity, fundraising and awareness efforts for charities and many more.

OPERATION CLEAN COMPETITION (OCC)

Educating our community on the dangers of Appearance and Performance Enhancing Substances (APES) and Nutrition & Dietary Supplement Safety: During year 6, OCC delivered more than 40 programs reaching an estimated 10,000 student-athletes, youth, teens, college and university students, and approximately 750+ adult influencers. Free programs delivered by OCC educational partner, the Taylor Hooton Foundation, combined with a multi-media advertising campaign helped magnify the message. Operation Clean Competition continued its outreach to middle schools, high schools, colleges and universities across the state. OCC is funded through a grant from the Rhode Island Foundation.



COACHES EDUCATION

The RIIL has implemented a comprehensive certification process for all athletic coaches hired after January 1, 2012. This certification process which incorporates elements of the NFHS Coaches Ed program will help athletic coaches meet the significant challenges they face each day. This process, which must be renewed every five years, will include a combination of in-house and NFHS online courses approved by the RIIL. To assist, we are organizing an annual conference for new and grandfathered coaches to fulfill their certification obligations. In addition, the conference will offer other coaches and athletic directors the opportunity to address numerous sport-related issues. During the 2018-19 school year, we held our preseason coaches' rules interpretation meetings, reviewing current sport rules and providing presentations on concussions, heat acclimatization, orthopedic injuries and the benefits of playing multiple sports.



“MY REASON WHY” CAMPAIGN

RIIL Student Athletes contributed their “Reasons Why” they participate in high school sports. This was a National Campaign to promote and recognize the values of high school sports.

RIIL SPORTS MEDIA

The RIIL partnered with the NFHS to stream tournament events and promote a school broadcast program. Presently, there are a number of schools who are participating. Twelve schools are now using a new automated sport production product—Pixellot. This new hardware/software solution is for schools that have limited broadcasting resources (people, equipment, time), enabling them to automate production of live events.

RIIL BASKETBALL LEGENDS

The RIIL honored 11 individuals as RIIL Basketball Legends, recognizing the former players, coaches and officials for their outstanding accomplishments in the sport. Introduced during the Final Four of the RIIL Credit Union Basketball Championships, the honorees included: Ernie DeWitt, Jim Dickinson, Bill McCaughey, Jim Psaras, Brenda Ginaitt Morrison, Kelli Fay-Wolfe and Brittany Wilson.



Overview of 2018-19 School Year

STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

The RIIL Student Advisory Board met throughout the year to discuss interscholastic initiatives. The students became CPR certified and launched an Anyone-Can-Save-A-Life initiative that encourages sports teams to develop an Emergency Action Plan. They helped to coordinate a leadership training workshop for RIIL student-athletes at the Ryan Center and represented R.I. at both the N.E. Student Leadership Conference at Worcester State University and the National Student Leadership Summit in Indianapolis. The Student Advisory Board also oversaw the 5th annual Peanut Butter Express Challenge, a statewide collection effort that resulted in a donation of more than 1.7 tons of peanut butter to the R.I. Community Food Bank. Lincoln High School was recognized as the school contributing the most peanut butter with more than 13,750 pounds. East Greenwich, Bay View, Woonsocket, Johnston and Portsmouth also led impressive collection efforts.

2018-19 SAB members: Peyton Cahill (Woonsocket HS), Matthew Campellone (La Salle Academy), Madison Flaxington (Lincoln HS), Nicholas Gwaltney (The Prout School), David Iannuccilli (Johnston HS), Jill Lunney (Portsmouth HS), Jack Pedro (Bishop Hendricken), Grace Pelletier (Bay View Academy), Nick Quarella (North Kingstown HS) and Taylor Troiano (St. Raphael Academy).



SALUTE TO SERVICE

The RIIL and its partner the Rhode Island Army National Guard celebrated its 6th year honoring Rhode Island service men and women through its Salute to Service program. Sixteen football teams wore camouflaged uniforms, provided by the RIARNG, during games and held pre-game and halftime celebrations for those who served. In the winter of 2019, we were pleased to host six Girls Basketball Salute to Service games for the second season.



PASSAGES: Richard B. Lynch



The RIIL mourned the passing of former RIIL Executive Director Richard B. Lynch on March 6, 2019. Recognized by the Providence Journal in 1999 as one of "Rhode Island's Top 100 Most Significant Sport Figures in the 20th century," his retirement from the RIIL in 2004 marked the end of a 46-year career in education and athletics that included teaching, coaching officiating football and basketball, as well as serving as a school administrator.

"Dick Lynch was a role model, friend and hero to countless people from all walks of life," said current RIIL Executive Director Thomas Mezzanotte. "He championed the cause of education-based athletics throughout his long and decorated career. Rhode Island will sincerely miss his presence, his personality, and his commitment to student athletes. He will remain to all the standard of excellence that we strive to attain."

Awards and Conferences

RIIL STUDENT-ATHLETE OF THE YEAR WINNERS

Presented by:

SHOWCASE

Michael Duffy, North Smithfield High School: Receiving the Honorable Msgr. Robert Newbold Scholarship Award, Duffy played tennis and soccer for the Northmen, was Vice President of the National Honor Society and was also a member of the French Club and Men's Choir. Accepted Early Decision to Seton Hall's 5-year Masters program in Diplomacy, he participated regularly in charity events in support of The Mayan Families Organization in Guatemala and donated half his earnings from part-time jobs to support the 2010 earthquake relief effort in Haiti.



Maile Somera, Barrington High School: Receiving the Honorable Msgr. Robert Newbold Scholarship Award, Somera was Gatorade R.I. Girls Volleyball Player of the Year for the third time, as the 5-foot-9 senior outside hitter concluded her high school career at Barrington with 1,387 kills and 832 digs, guiding the Eagles to the Division I-A regular-season title and a runner-up finish to North Kingstown in the Division I Championship. Also an exceptional student with a 4.18 GPA, Somera is continuing her academic and athletic career at Yale University.

STUDENT/TEAM RECOGNITION

We continued with the RIIL "Student Athlete of the Month" and "Team of the Week" recognition programs, which highlighted the outstanding accomplishments of individual athletes and teams. These achievements were publicized in the media throughout the school year and also honored at our annual luncheon, along with the recipients of: "Coach of the Year," "Athletic Director of the Year," "RI Spirit of Sport," "RI Heart of the Arts," "Team of the Year," "Administrator of the Year," RIIL Distinguished Service Award (new for 2018-19), "RI Student Advisory Board Senior Members" and "RI National Guard." The overall 2018-19 Male and Female Student Athletes of the Year were selected and each received a \$1,000 scholarship.

Student Athletes of the Month: *September:* Nicholas Iarussi, Woonsocket HS, and Abigail Lecam, Narragansett HS; *October:* Jack Perreault, North Kingstown HS, and Maile Somera, Barrington HS; *November:* Christopher Germsen, Central HS, and Elizabeth Sullivan, Portsmouth HS; *December:* Hezekiah Adeyeye, Woonsocket HS, and Olivia Barboza, Cumberland HS; *January:* Michael Duffy, North Smithfield HS, and Julianna Desautel, Davies HS; *February:* Clinton A. Ogunronbi, East Providence HS, and Dalia Suslovich, Lincoln HS; *March:* Theo Mihailides, Ponaganset HS, and Mary Breen, Classical HS.

Athletic Director of the Year: Dick Fossa, North Kingstown HS

Administrator of the Year: Colleen Gribbin, St. Mary Academy Bay View

Coach of the Year: Male - Dan Silva, Boys Soccer, Tolman HS. **Female** - Anjelique Cooley, Girls Cross Country & Girls Indoor Track, Central Falls HS

Team of the Year: North Kingstown HS Boys' Basketball Team

RIIL Distinguished Service Award: Cindy Bowden, RIIL Boys & Girls Swim Sport Director

RIIL Student Advisory Board – Senior Members: Matthew Campellone, La Salle; Madison Flaxington, Lincoln HS; Nick Quarella, North Kingstown HS; Nicholas Gwaltney, Prout; Taylor Troiano, St. Raphael.

RI Army National Guard Adjutant General Award: Paul Fedorenko, Bishop Hendricken HS; *Honorable Mention*— Aliyah Vieira, Mt. Hope HS; *Honorable Mention*— Henry Saucedo, Johnston HS.



RIIL Spirit of Sport: Rachel Motta, Tiverton HS

In the fall of 2018, Rachel Motta donated a kidney to her former Tiverton high school field hockey coach, Bethanie Ferguson, who in 2006 was diagnosed with a genetic disorder called Alport syndrome. "There are absolutely no words to say 'thank you' to her," said Ferguson, the mother of a 2-year-old son. "She's going to give me a whole new life." Motta serves the student-athletes in her community and beyond in numerous ways as a health teacher at Tiverton Middle School, the head girls lacrosse coach at Tiverton High School, an assistant field hockey coach at Moses Brown and a volunteer assistant coach for the Portsmouth boys basketball team.

Awards and Conferences

RIIL LEADERSHIP TRAINING WORKSHOP

Student-athletes learn “Leadership is Influence” at RIIL Leadership Training Workshop

More than 100 student-athletes representing 26 high schools from across the state gained a better understanding of how they can better lead and positively impact their sports teams at the RIIL’s Leadership Training Workshop, which was offered free of charge by the RIIL to its member schools on Jan. 28, 2019 at the Ryan Center. Deb and Dana Hult of Core Trainings led the workshop, conducting icebreaker activities and group discussions and nudging the students out of their comfort zones because “no worthwhile aspirations in your life will be accomplished” there, Dana explained.



NEW ENGLAND STUDENT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Nearly two dozen RIIL student-athletes attended the ninth annual New England Student Leadership Conference, held July 16-19, 2019 at Worcester State University. The students listened to inspirational speakers and participated in workshops and community service projects over the course of the four-day overnight conference.



“My experience was amazing. The energy the facilitators showed along with the overall excitement everyone had really created a positive environment for everyone to thrive and learn in.” - Tyler Dusty, Lincoln High School

“The biggest takeaway for me was being able to learn about other athletes’ experiences from other states. I really liked learning from them, and (twin sister) Sophia and I have some new Ideas to bring back to Saint Rays!” - Katherine Bianchi, St. Raphael Academy

NFHS NATIONAL STUDENT LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

RIIL Student Advisory Board members Jill Lunney (left) of Portsmouth High School and Grace Pelletier of St. Mary Academy—Bay View attended the National Student Leadership Summit, hosted by the National Federation of State High School Associations, July 22-24, 2019 in Indianapolis. The students were accompanied by RIIL Assistant Executive Director Mike Lunney.

“The second I walked in, I observed how diverse the area was; that was truly awesome to see! The most important things I learned were what a great team culture looks like, how to map your dreams and goals out on paper, and that stepping out of your comfort zone is always a good thing!” - Jill Lunney, Portsmouth High School

“My entire experience at NSLS was amazing, and I’m thankful to be a member of the Student Advisory Board because it allowed me the opportunity to attend this summit where I stepped out of my comfort zone and met people from around the country and Canada too!! ... My biggest takeaway was learning the values of inclusivity and empathy towards everyone I meet so I can be a stronger leader at Bay View.” - Grace Pelletier, Bay View



NFHS State Award for Outstanding Service: Betty Marquis



Concluding her 29th year as the RIIL’s Director of Fastpitch Softball, Betty Marquis has made many contributions to R.I. student-athletes over the past five decades. She taught health and physical education for 23 years, mostly in the Warwick school system, from 1971-94, and also served as athletic director and head of the Phys Ed Department at Pilgrim HS. Marquis spent the next 17 years in administration, holding various assistant principal and principal positions at Warwick Vets, Coventry, Pilgrim and Lincoln High Schools and serving on the PCOA. Marquis also helped usher in girls athletics in the 1970s, coaching field hockey, basketball, volleyball and softball over a 22-year period.

RIIL Perspective

Recently one of my colleagues was asked what his job was as Executive Director of high school athletics. In his response, he indicated that he was the head cheerleader for high school sports in his state. This is what he cheered for:

*I cheer for sportsmanship.
I cheer for playing by the rules, all the time, both the letter and the spirit of the rules.
I cheer for rivalries between schools, great rivalries, based on respect, not ridicule and rudeness.
I cheer for maximum effort to win each and every competition in which we engage. I don't cheer for winning at any cost.
I cheer for losing with grace, and winning with even greater grace, with modesty, with humility.
I cheer for the student who is a star in one sport, perhaps a substitute in another sport, and in the stands cheering for classmates in two or three other sports.
I cheer for the student who participates in both athletic and non-athletic activities.
I cheer for the lessons of victory, and the even greater lessons of defeat.
Without losses in sports, victories are far less sweet.
I cheer for a definition of winning in high school sports that is different than what we see on television and elsewhere.
And I cheer for those who will define victory in this way.
I cheer for those who value school before sports, academics before athletics, safety before competition.*

*I cheer for those who value sportsmanship – a precursor to citizenship, a way of life that goes way beyond sports.
I cheer for those who cheer the positive things at games, and not jeer in negative ways. I cheer for those who cheer for our teams, not against the other team.
I cheer for respect, not ridicule or rudeness, for officials and opponents.
I cheer for you to seize the opportunities to do things right.
Choices will come to you in many ways every day. In almost every game, every practice and in every day, in the school halls and shopping malls. Choose to do what is right. Choose what will uplift your teammates and classmates, promote them and encourage them.
Good sportsmanship, no . . . great sportsmanship, depends on you. ■*

As the head cheerleader of RI High School sports, I cheer for you – the athletes who have exemplified all of these qualities.
Have a great 2019-2020 school year!

Sincerely,
Thomas A. Mezzanotte



Rhode Island Interscholastic League

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