

2014 Section VI Hall of Fame Award Winners



Edward J. Leibinger

Official Swimming, Tonawanda High School

Over a 50-year span, Mr. Edward J. Leibinger was one of the most influential individuals involved in the sport of swimming.

He made an impact as not only a coach and official in the sport, but also as Director of Physical Education and Athletics at Tonawanda High School in Section VI. Leibinger helped pioneer the sport of swimming by first acting as NYSPHSAA Swimming Chairman from 1954-88 where he led a State committee to help develop a sport in need of growth.

In Section VI, he founded the Niagara Frontier Officials Association (NFOA) and became the Charter President in 1958. He remained a member of the NFOA for 36 years and also served as a representative or chairman on several other committees during that time, including the National Federation of State High School Athletic Associations and the New York State Certified

Swimming Officials Association (NYSCSOA). He served terms as Vice President and President for the NYSCSOA during the 70's. Furthermore, Leibinger was appointed President of the National Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association and appointed a member of the United States Olympic Diving Committee from 1968-72.

Prior to his service to various committees and organizations, Leibinger broke into the sport in 1946 when he became the swim coach and physical education teacher at Tonawanda High where he continued to coach until 1972. Over the course of his coaching career he compiled a 247-76 record, won 10 Section VI Swim Championships, 8 Niagara Frontier League Championships, the Eastern United States Championships in 1962, and produced 12 All-American swimmers. He also was an assistant coach for track and football at Tonawanda.

After retiring from coaching in 1972, Leibinger worked as the Director of Physical Education and Athletics for the Tonawanda District for 10 years. Many organizations have recognized and honored Leibinger for his hard work. In 1979 he was inducted into the National Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association Hall of Fame, and in 1985 he was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame.

A Lockport native, Leibinger graduated from Riverside High School (Buffalo) in 1937, received his Bachelors degree from Indiana University and his Masters degree from the University of Buffalo. He died after a long illness in September of 1999. Inducted into NYSPHSAA Hall of Fame 2005



Jacqueline A. Brummer, ESQ.

Athlete Gymnast, Sweet Home Central Schools

Ms. Jacqueline A. Brummer Esq. is one of the finest athletes to come out of Section VI.

She participated in varsity gymnastics starting at Sweet Home High School from 1977-1982, setting numerous records many of which still stand today. She is known to be the only gymnast in New York State to capture the All Around NYSPHSAA State title four years in a row.

In 1977, Brummer experienced success in her first year participating in the sport at the varsity level. She set the Section VI record in Uneven Bars and Balance Beam enroute to a berth in her first NYSPHSAA State Championship Tournament. A year later she earned her first NYSPHSAA

State title in the All Around and in the process became the first Section VI female athlete to ever win a State crown. She went on to capture three more All Around State titles along with three Vault championships (1979-82), three Balance Beam championships (1979-81), and two Uneven Bars championships (1981-82) in high school. In 1981 she set Sectional records in Balance Beam, Vault, Bars, Floor and All-Around.

Brummer began training at the age of 7 with the Kathy Gleason School of Gymnastics, Niagara Frontier Gymnastics Club in Wheatfield, New York, and became an elite gymnast by the time she was 15 (in 1980). She capped off her career as a member of the U.S.A.G. National Travel Team which includes the top 12 gymnasts in the nation, traveling to East Germany. As a result of her outstanding career at Sweet Home and as an elite gymnast, she earned a full athletic scholarship to Arizona State University. Brummer won the gold on uneven bars in 1984, and made a magnificent run of dominance in the sport during her senior year in 1986 when she notched an individual NCAA title in All Around and Balance Beam setting national records in those exercises. She was named All American in Uneven Bars, Beam and Vault, in 1983, 1984 and 1986, and garnered PAC-10 Athlete of the Year.

After graduation from ASU in 1986, Ms. Brummer continued an exceptional career as a professional gymnast traveling with the Kurt Thomas Gymnastics America U.S. Tour, mentoring for the USAG National Team, and even acting as a stuntwoman in Hollywood, specifically as a stunt double for Heather Locklear in the movie "Return of Swamp Thing". Brummer has also acted and starred in a number of commercials, television programs and movies ("Spitfire").

Born in Kenmore, NY, Brummer earned her Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice at Arizona State in 1987 then went on to receive her Doctor of Jurisprudence from SUNY at Buffalo in 1992. She then passed the California Bar Exam in 1993, practiced law in California for 6 years, and became a licensed attorney in Colorado in 2000, and New York in 2004. Inducted into NYSPHSAA Hall of Fame 2006



Drake M. Francescone

**Coach Swimming, Cross Country, Volleyball, Softball and Basketball
Buffalo City Schools**

After a 34-year career as a teacher and coach in the Buffalo Public Schools, Drake M. Francescone has left a lasting impression on student-athletes.

Francescone spent 23 years as head coach of varsity boys and girls swimming, tennis, cross country, softball, girls volleyball, and boys basketball at City Honors. He may be best known for his accomplishments as a head coach in girls volleyball when he led City Honors to four NYSPHSAA State Championships, 11 consecutive Buffalo City championships and six Section VI titles. Coach Francescone also led City Honors to another NYSPHSAA State title in 2003 when he guided the boys basketball team to a championship. During his time as basketball coach, he added three more Sectional titles to his resume. As a coach of both the girls and boys swimming teams, Francescone compiled a 70-3 career mark which included six Syracuse Cup titles and a string of 57 consecutive dual meet victories. Another sport where he coached both boys and girls teams was cross country in which he posted an 82-1 record and six Buffalo City championships with the girls, and a 94-1 record and six more Buffalo City crowns with the boys.

Despite his success as a coach, his legacy was not measured solely on wins and losses. He had a genuine concern for the welfare of student-athletes in Buffalo and was known to make a positive impact on every student-athlete he coached. His philosophies included putting academics first before any athletic contest along with making sure his student-athletes represented their school and community with pride. For numerous years he organized special tutoring for his players who needed additional academic assistance.

A lifelong Buffalo resident, Mr. Francescone graduated from Kenmore West High School in 1966 before continuing his education at Indiana University where he earned a Bachelor of Science in 1970. He went on to earn his Masters degree in 1972 at Niagara University. Inducted into NYSPHSAA Hall of Fame 2006



Robert Barrows

Coach Orchard Park Central Schools

Mr. Robert Barrows was one of the most successful high school baseball coaches New York State has ever seen. Barrows spent 39 seasons at Orchard Park High School where he erected the school's varsity program into a perennial power each year.

Bob compiled a 643-242 career record at Orchard Park and led the school to seven Section VI championships and one NYSPHSAA State title (1998) over a 39-year head coaching career. He retired but has continued to stay involved in baseball as a volunteer assistant at Orchard Park since 2001. In 2001, Barrows was inducted into the Bishop Timon Hall of Fame, Orchard Park Hall of Fame, and Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame. Furthermore, the Western New York Baseball Hall of Fame inducted him in 1998 and in 1993 he was voted as New York State Coach of the Year.

He's earned several awards for his success in baseball including the Orchard Bee Sportsperson of the Year, the University of Buffalo Dick Offenhamer award, and the Channel 7 Coach of the Year. Orchard Park's baseball field was also named Barrows Field in 1993. Beyond coaching, Bob has been the Erie County Interscholastic Conference Baseball Chairman since 1985 and currently is the Section VI Assistant Chairman (since 2003). He also had a dedication and commitment to students in the classroom at Orchard Park where he was a social studies and reading teacher.

Following graduation from Bishop Timon High School, Bob continued a playing career at Canisius College where to this day he holds a school hitting record for highest average. He earned his bachelors and graduate degree from Canisius.

Barrows and his wife Theresa reside in Buffalo and the couple has five children: Sue, Pat, Tim, Trish and Mary Kate. Inducted into NYSPHSAA Hall of Fame 2007



Gene J. Masters

Coach Grand Island High School

Gene J. Masters is the winningest football coach in western New York history and ranks among the top in the state in both football and baseball. From 1957-2000, Masters coached football and baseball at Brocton High School ('57-'62) and Grand Island High School ('63-2000).

Gene's coaching career started in 1957 at Brocton High School where he captured two baseball championships and three football titles until 1962. In 1963, Masters became the first varsity football and baseball coach at Grand Island High School and immediately turned both programs into highly respected ones on the field.

Over a 44 year career as Grand Island's football coach he compiled a record of 248-107-8 ranking him #1 in wins among Western New York coaches and sixth in New York State. His teams captured 19 championships, won four consecutive Section VI Class B titles (1989-92), and made ten playoff appearances. Gene coached 35 All-Western New York All Stars and had three players earn Player of the Year honor. His 1973 team was one of the greatest teams in the history of Western New York football going 8-0 that season and outscoring opponents 253-7.

In 1991, Grand Island honored Coach Masters by naming the football field "Masters Field" in his honor. That same decade he was named Western New York Coach of the Decade following Western New York Coach of the Year plaudits in 1978 and 1989.

Coach Masters also achieved great success on the baseball diamond. He compiled 440 career wins, 15 championships, ten league crowns and five sectional titles. Along the way Gene coached five players drafted in the Major League Baseball amateur draft and in 1991, he was named Coach of the Year by the Niagara Frontier League. A former Section VI baseball chairman, Coach Masters was inducted into the Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame in 1999, then in 2002, he was inducted into the Tonawanda Sports Hall of Fame.

Gene was a graduate of Tonawanda High School and University of Buffalo in 1957. He also fought in the Korean War from 1952-54. Gene, who passed away in 2001, was married for 45 years to his late wife Marjorie and is survived by his son Michael, his daughter Cynthia and four grandchildren.

Inducted into NYSPHSAA Hall of Fame 2008

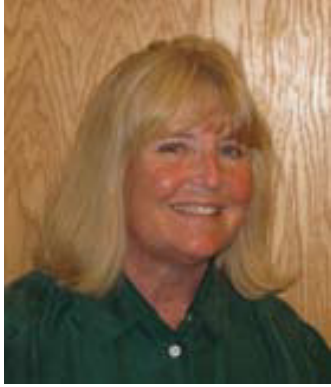


Daryl P. Johnston

Athlete Lewiston Porter High School

Daryl P. Johnston, former Lewiston-Porter High football star and All-Pro fullback of the Dallas Cowboys, led the Lancers football team to two straight Section VI titles in 1982 and 1983. Johnston, a Youngstown, NY native, was a running back, punter, place kicker, and defensive back for Lewiston-Porter.

After earning 1983 Western New York Player of the Year honors and breaking numerous records his senior year, he went on to Syracuse University where he was an All-Big East honoree in 1988 and an All-American in 1989. Following four Super Bowls in the NFL and an 11-year career with the Cowboys, Johnston is currently one of the top NFL color commentators for FOX. Inducted into NYSPHSAA Hall of Fame 2009



Sally Kus

Coach Sweet Home Central Schools

Sally Kus is an icon in interscholastic volleyball in Western New York. Kus was the girls head volleyball coach at Sweet Home High School (Section VI) from 1974 to 1996. During her tenure at Sweet Home she compiled an impressive 794- 29 record which included 21 consecutive ECIC League Championship titles (76-96), 20 consecutive Section VI Championships (77-96), 15 consecutive Far West Regional Championships (81-96) and six consecutive NYSPHSAA Championships from 1990 to 1995. In 1985, Kus broke the National High School Federation Record for most consecutive victories at 219 then re-set her own record by reaching 292 straight wins in 1987—a year in which she was named National Federation Volleyball Coach of the Year and saw

her program ranked as the best volleyball program in the country by Volleyball Monthly. Just four years later, her program was ranked #1 in the country by USA Today and Volleyball Monthly.

Numerous Halls of Fame have recognized Sally for her tremendous success as a volleyball coach including induction into the Sweet Home High School Hall of Fame in 1993 as well as the National Volleyball Hall of Fame and the Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame both in 1996. Continuing her honors, in 1994 Kus received the National Woman's Sports Foundation Coaches award. In 2004, Kus published a book with Human Kinetics titled "Coaching Volleyball Successfully". Kus now coaches at Cuba-Rushford High School in Section V where she has a present record of 57-7. In addition to her accomplishments, Kus is a member of the American Volleyball Coaches Association and a Member of USA Volleyball, and has coached more than 150 Division1 Volleyball scholarship recipients.

Prior to a decorated coaching career, Kus was an athlete at Sweet Home High School, then went on to earn a bachelor's degree from the University of Akron (where she lettered in basketball) and her master's degree from the University at Buffalo. NYSPHSAA Hall of Fame 2010



Dr. Ronald Black

Administrator Akron Central Schools

Dr. Ronald Black, a long-time administrator in Section VI, was NYSPHSAA's President from 2006-08 and the Section VI President for two terms. For nearly 40 years, he worked in Section VI schools as a teacher and Administrative Assistant to the District Principal at Holland Central School (1961-72) and as a Principal in Akron Central School District (1972-99).

An Orchard Park resident, Dr. Black was additionally appointed a long-term seat on the NYSPHSAA's Championship Advisory Committee and served on the Strategic Planning Committee in the early 2000's.

Prior to his administrative career, Dr. Black was a four- sport athlete playing football, basketball, track and baseball at Buffalo Technical High School, then went on to play soccer at SUNY Cortland and later became the coach of the freshman soccer team

at Penn State University. He earned his Bachelor of Science from SUNY Cortland and a Master of Science in 1961 from Pennsylvania State University. He additionally earned a Doctorate of Education from SUNY Buffalo in 1970, and in 1973-74 he received a Certificate of Specialization in Education Administration and a Certification of School District Administrators from Niagara University.

Ron has received numerous honors and awards during his career including the School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS) Region 12 Administrator of the Year Award (1991) as well as SAANYS New York State Distinguished Secondary Principal (1992) award and the New York State Athletic Administrators Association Distinguished Service Award to Athletics (1992). Inducted into NYSPHSAA Hall of Fame 2011



Stacey Schroeder-Watt Black

Athlete Grand Island Central Schools

Stacey Schroeder-Watt was one of the most exceptional track athletes in the state competing at Grand Island High School in Section VI. Her dominance in the shot put and discus led to a remarkable career including two NYSPHSAA State Championships in the shot put (1991, 1992) and one in the discus in 1992 when she shattered the girls state record, which still stands today. From 1988 through 1990 as an underclassman, she also earned spots in the NYSPHSAA State Championships after dominating Section VI in shot put and discus. Overall, Schroeder-Watt won five Section shot put titles and four Section discus crowns to go along with eight Niagara Frontier League championships. Her performances in the shot put and discus led to the honor of All-American status in 1991 and 1992 and being ranked number one in the country in 1992.

Beyond track, Stacey also successfully participated in high school volleyball and basketball. In volleyball, she was a first team League All-Star in 1992 and second team All Star in 1991 while helping her team to a Section championship. As a center on the basketball team, she was a second team League All-Star in 1991 and Honorable Mention in 1990. Her athletic success propelled her to a full scholarship at the University of Florida where she contributed to the Gators success for four years. While in Florida she earned status as an academic All-American, Academic All- SEC and became a two-time NCAA Division I All-American in the discus event. Stacey graduated from UF cum laude with a Bachelor's Degree in microbiology and cell science. Following graduation from Florida, Stacey earned a Doctorate of Medicine at State University of New York Health Science Center (Syracuse). After medical school she returned to Buffalo where she completed her training to become a pediatric anesthesiologist. She practices in Buffalo and is program director for the pediatric anesthesiology fellowship program. Inducted into NYSPHSAA Hall of Fame 2011