



michigan high school athletic association

media information

1661 ramblewood drive east lansing, mi 48823 517.332.5046 fax-517.332.4071 www.mhsaa.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 17, 2009

Contact: John Johnson or Andy Frushour

517.332.5046 or media@mhsaa.com

MHSAA Web Site Media Page: www.mhsaa.com/media

2009 Forsythe Award Presented To Paul Ellinger

EAST LANSING, Mich. – March 17 – Paul L. Ellinger, whose career started as a teacher and coach in Birch Run in 1971 and concluded in June of 2008 as Superintendent of Cheboygan Area Schools and President of the MHSAA Representative Council, is the 2009 recipient of the Michigan High School Athletic Association's Charles E. Forsythe Award.

This annual award is in its 32nd year of existence and is named after former MHSAA Executive Director Charles E. Forsythe, the Association's first full time and longest-serving chief executive. Forsythe Award recipients are selected each year by the MHSAA Representative Council, based on an individual's outstanding contribution to the interscholastic athletics community. Ellinger will be presented the award on March 28 at the Breslin Student Events Center in East Lansing at halftime of the Boys Basketball Class B Final.

In 37 years of service, Ellinger's career took a path to nearly the four corners of Michigan. He coached basketball, baseball and track at all levels and taught business courses ranging from accounting to business math. He served in the Thumb at Caseville High School from 1975-1987, and was Principal there from 1980-1987 before becoming the Superintendent of Deerfield Public Schools in Southeastern Michigan from 1987-1991; Beal City Public Schools in Central Michigan for three years (1991-1994); Hartford Public Schools in Southwest Michigan for five years (1994-1999); and completing his career in the Northern Lower Peninsula with nine years as Superintendent of Cheboygan Area Schools (1999-2008). In his 21 years of distinguished service as a Superintendent, Ellinger continued themes of good business and educational decisions and recognizing the value of interscholastic athletics.

Facilities were built or remodeled under Ellinger's leadership as Superintendent at both Hartford and Cheboygan. While at Hartford, he added the sports of competitive cheer, boys and girls bowling and middle school cross country. At Cheboygan, he oversaw the addition of three varsity sports for girls and two new sports for boys and helped form the Straits Area Conference, which spanned both peninsulas.

Ellinger's 22 years to an elected statewide Junior High-Middle School position on the MHSAA Representative Council is one of the longest terms of service in Council history. He served as President of the Representative Council from 2000-2008. He also provided leadership on several MHSAA Committees over many years, including the Executive and Finance, Junior High/Middle School, Tournament Site Selection and Classification Committees.

"Paul always did his homework. There was no one more prepared or a more thorough member of our Representative Council." stated MHSAA Executive Director John E. "Jack" Roberts, who began his tenure at the Association the first year Ellinger was elected to the Council. "He was a skilled and caring Council President with a good sense of the value of school sports, sound rules and procedures and was respected by Council members and staff alike."

A native and graduate of Lincoln-Alcona High School, Ellinger earned both his degrees from Central Michigan University -- a bachelor's in 1970 in Business Education and Physical Education, and his master's 1979 in Educational Administration.

(more)

2-2-2 – Paul Ellinger Honored With Forsythe Award

His involvement in the broader community continued throughout Ellinger's tenure in education and includes membership on the Cheboygan Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees; Cheboygan Rotary; United Way Campaigns for Van Burn County, Deerfield and Beal City; and business associations in Beal City and Hartford. Ellinger was also an MHSAA Registered Official in volleyball, basketball, track and softball between 1970 and 1990.

Past recipients of the Charles E. Forsythe Award are:

1978 - Brick Fowler, Port Huron; Paul Smarks, Warren
1979 - Earl Messner, Reed City; Howard Beatty, Saginaw
1980 - Max Carey, Freesoil
1981 - Steven Sluka, Grand Haven; Samuel Madden, Detroit
1982 - Ernest Buckholz, Mt. Clemens; T. Arthur Treloar, Petoskey
1983 - Leroy Dues, Detroit; Richard Maher, Sturgis
1984 - William Hart, Marquette; Donald Stamats, Caro
1985 - John Cotton, Farmington; Robert James, Warren
1986 - William Robinson, Detroit; Irving Soderland, Norway
1987 - Jack Streidl, Plainwell; Wayne Hellenga, Decatur
1988 - Jack Johnson, Dearborn; Alan Williams, North Adams
1989 - Walter Bazylewicz, Berkley; Dennis Kiley, Jackson
1990 - Webster Morrison, Pickford; Herbert Quade, Benton Harbor
1991 - Clifford Buckmaster, Petoskey; Donald Domke, Northville
1992 - William Maskill, Kalamazoo; Thomas G. McShannock, Muskegon
1993 - Roy A. Allen Jr., Detroit; John Duncan, Cedarville
1994 - Kermit Ambrose, Royal Oak
1995 - Bob Perry, Lowell
1996 - Charles H. Jones, Royal Oak
1997 - Michael A. Foster, Richland; Robert G. Grimes, Battle Creek
1998 - Lofton C. Greene, River Rouge; Joseph J. Todey, Essexville
1999 - Bernie Larson, Battle Creek
2000 - Blake Hagman, Kalamazoo; Jerry Cvengros, Escanaba
2001 - Norm Johnson, Bangor; George Lovich, Canton
2002 - John Fundukian, Novi
2003 - Ken Semelsberger, Port Huron
2004 – Marco Marcet, Frankenmuth
2005 – Jim Feldkamp, Troy
2006 – Dan McShannock, Midland; Dail Prucka, Monroe
2007 – Keith Eldred, Williamston; Tom Hickman, Spring Lake
2008 – Jamie Gent, Haslett; William Newkirk, Sanford-Meridian

The MHSAA is a private, not-for-profit corporation of voluntary membership by over 1,600 public and private senior high schools and junior high/middle schools which exists to develop common rules for athletic eligibility and competition. No government funds or tax dollars support the MHSAA, which was the first such association nationally to not accept membership dues or tournament entry fees from schools. Member schools which enforce these rules are permitted to participate in MHSAA tournaments, which attract approximately 1.6 million spectators each year.