

John Licata

Lifetime Service to Wrestling

Many stewards of wrestling come to the sport through education; e.g., teaching at the school where one coaches. Honoree John Licata has gone a different way connecting his love of wrestling with his career as a business executive.

His commitment to the sport began as a freshman at Pittston Area High School (PA), when his football coach asked him to join the wrestling team. He became captain of his team, and was also captain of his team at Wyoming Seminary, after which he entered West Chester State College. He compiled 100 wins for the Rams, was a three-time conference finalist, a conference champion, and an NCAA qualifier. While taking a Master's Degree at James Madison University, he began his coaching career at JMU as Dick Besnier's assistant for six years. Later, he contributed five years of assistant coaching at Westfield HS, his daughter's school.

All the while, he was launching and maintaining enterprises, serving as President or Vice President for several moving service companies; he eventually became a founding owner of a large van line agency (employing many wrestlers and keeping them toned with moving and lifting jobs). Currently, he and his wife Pat own The Licata Group, a real estate and consulting firm.

He has cheerfully and willingly contributed his business expertise to wrestling. He is a founder and currently Executive Director of the Wrestlers in Business Network (WIBN) and has steered the organization to expansion and partnership with the National Wrestling Coaches Association (NWCA). In the latter, he is Coaching Development Coordinator, working with their Leadership Academy as a "coach to the coaches," or "wrestling's future," as he puts it. He also serves on the boards of the Reaches Foundation, the National Wrestling Restoration Foundation, and the Virginia Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame (past president).

Most importantly, he is the proud father of his 26-year-old daughter Alexandra, and the loving husband of 35 years to Pat, his high-school sweetheart.

