

## 2025 MERIT AWARD RECIPIENTS



**Lance Morrison**

West Central – Dinsmore Composite School



**Jud Heilman**

Saskatoon – SSSAD

## SASKATCHEWAN HIGH SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION



## Merit Award Banquet

Temple Gardens Hotel & Spa  
June 19, 2025

# 2025 SERVICE AWARDS

Service awards are presented to the following individuals. Each award is inscribed as follows:

## IN APPRECIATION OF YOUR SERVICE TO STUDENT ATHLETES AND FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE PHILOSOPHY AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SASKATCHEWAN HIGH SCHOOLS ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

### KYLA SNELL – BATTLE WEST

Unity Composite High School

- Kyla joined Unity Composite High School in 1998 as a Student Services teacher. While Kyla does not work with a set grade or subject, she works with a group of students where relationships are the key to success.
- Kyla fills her time outside of writing reports and attending meetings with coaching golf, Jr./Sr. curling, Jr. badminton, and managing Sr. basketball. Often three of these activities overlap where she is running from the rink to the gym while booking hotels for basketball all at the same time.
- Kyla would be considered the "host with the most" given that she refuses to turn down an opportunity to showcase UCHS by hosting any conference, regional, or provincial event. This past curling season she hosted district, regional, and provincial curling followed up with regional basketball and then hosting a grade 7 badminton tournament.
- Kyla is an avid Rider fan and Blue Jay fan and will travel great distances to follow her family in sports in addition to her own love of golf and curling. Recently she has become a certified baseball scorekeeper and has worked at national baseball events.
- Ken Parker, UCHS Athletic Director had this to say: "I can always count on Kyla as a supporter to our hosting responsibilities or bids to host. She will always say 'Lets get the bid and then UCHS the \*%\$ out of it'. If it is not her sport directly, she will always be on the host committee thinking of all the details to make it a great event. Our school has successfully hosted 4 volleyball, 1 badminton, 1 curling provincial, and even a double regional basketball with her expertise."



### PAUL MCTAVISH – CENTRAL VALLEY

Prairie Spirit School Division

- Paul has been a coach, teacher, principal, coordinator, and superintendent in Prairie Spirit School Division. He was involved in the initial planning committee for Physical Education in PSSD and has served CVAC as the Basketball Referee-in-Chief, the District Officials Commissioner, and PSSD Coordinator for CVAC.
- Paul started his teaching career in Delisle coaching football and basketball. He moved to Perdue and continued to coach and became their AD. This was also when he assumed the role of CVAC DOC. Next stop was Hague, where he continued as AD and coached girls' volleyball and basketball. At Clavet Composite for 7 years, Paul coached the Sr. boys basketball team. This time was highlighted by 4 teams earning a spot at Hoopla, one winning a Gold medal in 2011 and another a Silver in 2013. He also coached girls' volleyball. From here Paul moved to Colonsay to teach, be AD, and to coach cross-country, basketball, and boys' volleyball. Paul's final school placement was Martensville where he coached Sr. Girls' Basketball and cross-country. After moving to division office, Paul continued his involvement with sport as the Coordinator assigned to CVAC, helping guide the organization through the covid years.
- Myles Loeffler, CVAC Extra-Curricular Facilitator, said: "Paul has been an integral part of CVAC and PSSD since their inception. He brings quiet confidence, calming leadership, and a sense of humour to his roles. His belief in education through athletics has always been reflected in his dedication to school sports and his support of athletes, coaches, and officials. CVAC is proud to have Paul named our Service Award recipient for 2025!"



### LUKE KRIENKE – EAST CENTRAL

Langenburg Central School

- Luke started his career working in 2006 in Allan, Invermay, Clavet, and Perdue schools before moving to Langenburg in 2011. Working as the Athletic Director at LCS Luke has spent the past 14 years coaching golf, basketball, badminton, cross country, track and field, and senior boys and girls volleyball. He is also an official in junior and senior volleyball.
- He has been a member of ECDAAs since 2011 and has served as ECDAAs Vice President since 2021. He is the SAG rep on volleyball for ECDAAs.
- Luke served as a chairperson for LCS New School project and played an integral role in the community Fitness Centre at LCS in 2016.
- Sheldon Kaminski, former colleague, said: "Luke brings an endless passion and energy to his teaching and coaching. His dedication and commitment to the staff and students at LCS is inspiring. Luke strives to provide athletic opportunities for all students at LCS in order for them to become better athletes, students, and citizens." Curtis Spelay, ECDAAs President, said "Luke is a valuable member of East Central as a coach and serving as our Vice President for the past 4 years. The community of Langenburg is lucky to have him working with their student athletes whether on the court, course, or track. Luke's commitment to his school and community make him very deserving of the SHSAA Service award for our district."



### DAVID ROWE – HORIZON CENTRAL

Humboldt Collegiate Institute

- When he began his career in Pangman, David coached football for three years in Weyburn. While in Pangman, David was also head coach of the track and field team for four years.
- When David began at HCI in 1997, he began his long tenure with the Mohawks Football program. During his time coaching, the Mohawks won three provincial championships. In 2023, he gave up his Offensive Coordinator role to another staff member with intent to mentor him in that role.
- David helped coach track & field for six seasons. When HCI had a wrestling program, David was the staff supervisor and also acted as assistant coach for two years in the HCI Senior Boys and one year in the Junior Boys Basketball program.
- Cory Popoff, Superintendent of HR (Horizon SD) and former Principal of HCI, said: "Dave exemplifies the power of integrity and dedication in his work as a coach and teacher. Dave empowers his students to rise above challenges, fostering a sense of self-belief and resilience. His ability to forge meaningful relationships with students is not just a gift; it is a testament to his steadfast commitment to putting their growth and development first. Whether on the field or in the classroom, Dave embodies the essence of true leadership, imparting not only skills and systems but also life lessons that resonate far beyond the game."



### KELLY LINNELL – NORTH EAST

Melfort and Unit Comprehensive Collegiate

- Kelly has coached high school athletics for over 20 years. She coached Sr. Girls basketball for 5 years at Estevan and has coached at MUCC since 2008.
- Her first love is basketball but she has coached volleyball and track as well.
- Kelly coordinated the "Pink Game" and raised over \$10,000 that was donated to the Melfort Oncology Department, as well as coordinated the "Green Game" raising money for Mens' Mental Health initiatives.
- As well as coaching she officiates both volleyball and basketball.
- Kelly has been Commissioner or on the hosting committee for several SHSAA Regional and Provincial competitions.
- Tim Johnstone, fellow colleague, had this to say: "Kelly's commitment to school sport can never be questioned. She has been a role model to student athletes as well as her peers both on and off the court."



## NEAL BOUTIN – SOUTH WEST

Gull Lake School

- Neal has taught/coached his entire career in what is now the Chinook School Division. For the past 26+ years, he has been a fixture at Gull Lake School and at SWAC events. He has coached senior boys and senior girls volleyball, junior and senior badminton, cross country, golf, track and field, and football (tackle and flag).
- Neal has also stepped up to be the commissioner of numerous SWAC district championships and provincial championships. He has run SWAC cross country, track and field, and junior/senior badminton championships. Included in those years of being a commissioner, are two 3A girls provincial volleyball championship, 6-A-Side provincial football championship, and a provincial boys curling championship.
- Another standout aspect of his contribution was his leadership in his football program (at the 6-A-Side and 9-A-Side level). Lions Football is woven into the fabric of Gull Lake, and being the head coach carries significant responsibility and pressure. Yet, he handled it all with integrity, composure, and grace.
- Neal is an influential coach, who has mentored so many young coaches over the years. His calm demeanor, positive attitude, and strong leadership skills have earned him the trust of our athletic directorate and coaches alike.
- Adele Kirwan, Gull Lake Principal and long time colleague, said: "Neal is always leading by example and upholding the values that define the school and community."
- Valerie Gordon, SWAC/ChinookSD Athletic Coordinator, said: "Over the decades of knowing and working with Neal, his sense of humour and engaging wit makes him a pleasure to work with. When you couple that with his dedication to detail and work ethic, you have the perfect combination of leader and mentor for future coaches and athletic directors."



## RICK GARCHINSKI – WEST CENTRAL

St. Gabriel School Biggar

- Rick began his career teaching at Raymore School in 1991 then moved to St. Gabriel School in September of 1991. He is retiring this year after 34.5 years as an educator.
- From 2021-2024 he sat on the West Central District Executive in the role of Website/Secretary.
- Rick has coached senior girls basketball, senior boys volleyball, senior cross-country, senior track & field and junior golf, cross-country, volleyball, basketball, badminton, and track & field.
- He is a football official, cross-country starter, and track & field starter. Rick had the privilege to learn from Athletics Canada's Wall of Honour and Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame and Museum recipient, Ron Walsh, during district meets.
- Lance Morrison, 2025 Merit Award Winner, shared: "Rick, Thank you for your many years of dedicated service to West Central. From your involvement in countless sports to your role as the starter at our track meets, your commitment to the student-athletes of our district has always been evident. We've been fortunate to have you as a teacher, coach, and executive member—your impact has been deeply felt across every role you've taken on. The community of Biggar, and especially St. Gabriel's School, will surely miss the incredible time and energy you've invested in every aspect of your students' lives."
- Mitchell Wintonyk, West Central President, said: "Rick has always been a pillar of athletics in West Central. From coaching, to being on the West Central executive, to officiating, Rick has wore many hats and giving back in so many ways. Students, staff, and parents at St. Gabriel's school have been lucky to have Rick as a coach and a mentor for so many years. Congratulations Rick on your SHSAA Service Award."



## DAVE EARL – SASKATOON

Aden Bowman Collegiate

- Dave is the Vice Principal of Aden Bowman Collegiate in Saskatoon. He currently sits on the SSSAD Executive as the Saskatoon Public Schools Admin Link, a position he has held since 2019. During his time on the SSSAD Executive, Dave has volunteered for various sub-committee work, including - Finance Committee, Discipline Committee, Gymnasium Signage Committee, and various scheduling committees. Dave served 4 years on the SHSAA Board of Directors as the Saskatoon Representative from 2019 to 2023.
- Dave has coached 21 seasons of senior football and 23 seasons of basketball in his 25 years with SSSAD. He also coached 7 seasons of Sr. football and Sr. boys basketball at North Battleford Comp at the beginning of his career. After more than three decades of dedication to high school athletics and education in Saskatchewan, Dave is Superannuating this June.
- Scott Hundseth, friend, states: "When thinking of David Earl, the coach, the words that come to mind are dedicated, honest, and passionate. He is an exceptional coach who motivates his players more than anyone I have ever seen. He puts everything into making his kids better on the field or on the court. To limit his profile to just those qualities does not do him justice. Dave Earl is well respected. He is classy, and he is hard working. He is a great mentor to many people, including myself. I have great admiration for this man and am honored to call him my friend."
- Jud Heilman, SSSAD Athletic Commissioner, states: "I have known Dave since our days in North Battleford over 30 years ago and have had the pleasure of working with him in many capacities since. From the moment you meet him, Dave's calm demeanor, professionalism, and commitment to students stand out. He has spent his career drawing on these qualities to ensure every student athlete he has coached receives the very best experience. Dave never hesitates to step up—whether it's as a supervisor, committee member, or coach, he consistently volunteers his time and expertise in support of school sport. His contributions extend beyond the sidelines, having served as a dedicated SSSAD Executive member and a respected Saskatoon District Representative on the SHSAA Board of Directors for two terms."



## LORNE POLUPSKI – SOUTH CENTRAL

A.E. Peacock Collegiate

- Lorne has coached in Moose Jaw since 1982, and in Estevan prior to that. He has been the coach of the Peacock senior girls volleyball team since 1991 and has coached basketball for many years as well.
- Lorne has been officiating volleyball off and on since the 1980s, even going as far to ref in between coaching games at local tournaments when short refs.
- He supports multi-sport athletes and is always encouraging volleyball players to try/play other sports. He coordinates practices, games, and tournaments as best he can around other commitments. He acknowledges their busy schedules and gives them breaks when they need it, no questions asked. He cheers on local teams any chance he can and at tournaments, he is often heard discussing game play with other coaches and cheering on the opposition.
- Krysta Caplette, fellow colleague, said: "The most amazing thing about Polupski is that he spends hours in the gym, with any athlete who is willing to put in the work. If any athletes express the need to work on a certain skill, he finds gym time and works with them, no matter who they are. He is in the gym nearly every day at lunch, working with any athlete that wants to be better, male or female. He even encourages kids that have never played before to come out and try and get in some reps; he is known to see potential in everyone. He ALWAYS puts the students' best interests first and foremost."



### **ALISSA MCKINNA – REGINA** Winston Knoll Collegiate

- Alissa is a dedicated educator and coach who has been a cornerstone of Winston Knoll Collegiate for the past 14 years.
- Her journey in high school athletics began in 2007 at Thom Collegiate, where she coached Junior Girls Volleyball for two seasons. Since 2011, she has brought her passion and energy to Winston Knoll, where she coached Junior Girls Volleyball for over a decade, leading the team to a city championship title in 2018. This season, she has moved into the role of Senior Girls Volleyball coach, continuing her legacy of mentorship and excellence.
- Beyond volleyball, Alissa has supported the school's Track and Field program since 2021, ensuring a wide range of athletic opportunities are available for students. Since 2019, she has served as Winston Knoll's Athletic Director, where she manages and oversees the school's entire athletics program with professionalism, care, and inclusivity.
- Alissa's dedication is not confined to school hours. She has continuously expanded her impact through extensive volunteer work with community-based club volleyball. She currently serves as the Head Coach for the Summit Volleyball Club U18 team (2025).
- "Alissa has devoted countless hours to coaching a variety of extra-curricular activities," shares Brooklyn Willox, a teacher colleague and assistant coach. "Alissa not only helps athletes develop their skills but provides learning opportunities to be a positive role model, develop leadership skills, responsibility, and to be a better citizen within our community."



### **JOHN HARVEY – QU'APPELLE VALLEY** Greenall High School

- John has spent his career deeply involved in athletics across every school he has served. His coaching expertise spans various sports, and his passion for developing athletes has made a lasting impact on many students. He has an extensive list of accomplishments including regional championships, district titles, trips to provincials, two sportsmanship banners, and winning a 2A Boys Provincials title in 1999 with Wolseley.
- Beyond his hours spent coaching in the gym, John has also devoted much of his time to officiating numerous sports events. This dual role of coach and official is a testament to his dedication to the success and growth of the athletic programs he's been a part of. Most recently, John recertified as a basketball coach and has officiated countless games throughout the season. His willingness to take on this responsibility, especially in a time when there is a severe shortage of officials, cannot be overstated.
- Trevor Viergutz, Qu'Appelle Valley District President, had this to say: "It is no coincidence that the schools where John has been an administrator have also had numerous accomplishments at the Provincial level. John truly is an advocate for high school sport and has shown this through so many major and minor roles. Stepping up to coach a sport that needs a coach, playing pick up basketball at lunch, mentoring young coaches, attending important school tournaments and even sweeping the gym floor between matches at Provincials. John truly does it all and has been a valuable contributor to QVDA athletics as a coach, official, administrator, and executive member."



### **TRENT RUMPEL – NORTH CENTRAL** Kinistino Public School

- Trent has been a long-time teacher, coach, and athletic administrator at Kinistino Public School. He has turned into Mr. Everything for Kinistino School. He has coached or been involved with every sport that is offered at the school as well as officiated at the same time. He has hosted provincial events in his school such as the 2018 SHSAA 2A Provincial Boys Volleyball Championships.
- Trent has also been the NCDAA Officials Commissioner for the past few years.
- Trent has been instrumental in starting up a community youth softball program and the construction of a new ball diamond in Kinistino.
- Adam Svenkeson, colleague, said: "Trent has been a leader and supporter of athletics in our school, community, and district since his arrival in 2016. He has taken on numerous programs and been the driving force in various school and community athletic initiatives that have and will continue to benefit our town & district. Trent can be counted on to take on whatever role is needed to ensure the success of events and cares deeply about the students and programs he is involved in."



### **DAVID PERO – NORTH WEST** Lashburn High School

- Dave has been an integral part of the NWHSAA. He has been part of the executive for many years and has been the Athletic Director of Lashburn High School. He has coached numerous hours specifically highlighting the basketball program in Lashburn High School. He is very invested in basketball and growing the sport in the Northwest that he has created a league that encompasses teams in Junior and Senior all around the area.
- This season, Dave took on three senior teams to ensure that every senior student in the building who wanted to play, was allowed the opportunity.
- Dave has worked hard at his reffing as he has now even participated in HOOPLA for 2-3 years.
- Dave recently has become Official Commissioner in which working alongside Rob Kozinski organizes officials for all Jr. and Sr. Districts, Regionals, and Provincials.
- Jay Elder, Merit Award Winner and Past President of NWHSAA, had this to say: "Dave has dedicated his career to helping kids be better. Whether it is academically or through sport, you can always count on Dave to be all in. Dave would rather coach multiple teams and figure out how to travel than see a team without a coach. Students across the north west have benefited greatly from Dave's selfless service to education and sport."



### **JACINDA DREW – SOUTH EAST** Midale Central School

- The South East District would like to acknowledge the tremendous contribution that Jacinda Drew has made to athletics and education in Saskatchewan over the last 25 years. Since 2005 Jacinda has been the Athletic Director for Midale School. During this time, Jacinda has sat on the SEDAA Executive Board and has represented the South East District at the SHSAA AGM since that time.
- She is a strong supporter of extracurricular activities at the school level and through this support and leadership, support of extracurricular activities in Midale School has risen. She has hosted invitational, district, and regional events as a coach, official and commissioner. Her dedication to sport, positive enthusiasm, sense of humour, and ability to get things done are characteristics that serve Jacinda well.
- Fred Jerred, Athletic Commissioner for SE Cornerstone School Division said this about Jacinda: "Jacinda exemplifies the true meaning of what an athletic director should be like. We are so fortunate to have someone like Jacinda sit at the table and be part of our athletic discussions. Jacinda is one who will assist you in any capacity. Jacinda's dedication and genuine concern for those around her are qualities that leave lasting impressions on those that have had the pleasure to be associated with her."

