

2012 PA Legacy Coach Award Recipients

The Legacy Coach Award has been initiated by the PA Coaches Committee in recognition of the many influential coaches who have served in our association, and have selflessly strengthened our sport(s) through teaching, mentoring, and promoting our profession. Criterion is weighted heavily on coaches who were not only great coaches, but who also inspired and trained/mentored many of us to become coaches ourselves.

Previous recipients are: Jim Hunt (Humboldt state), Jim Santos (Hayward State), Bud Winter (San Jose State).



Margaret Dixon, Oakland PAL

Coach Dixon is a retired Oakland Police Officer and has dedicated over 33 years volunteering with the youth in the city of Oakland. It was during her years as a police officer that Margaret founded the Oakland Police Activities League (PAL) Track and Field Team, and since then, the program has grown to be one of the largest youth track clubs in the bay area.

The PAL track team has allowed hundreds of Oakland youth to travel beyond the city limits, a first-time experience for many kids in the PAL program. Every year, more than 100 boys and girls, ages 5-18 years old, register to run for PAL, and many of those boys and girls continue running in high

school and college. Margaret has had the opportunity to witness many of her athletes receive athletic scholarships to various colleges across the country. Margaret has spent countless hours coaching athletes, and has hosted over a dozen free meets. For Margaret, coaching the PAL track team has been more than just developing runners. She wanted to provide the youth with an alternative outlet to the sometimes grim reality that some young boys and girls faced. She believes that there is no better feeling than helping a kid transfer their skills from the track, to the classroom in order to help in accomplishing their goals. Hopefully one day, those athletes will decide to give back and be productive citizens in their community.



Walt Lange, Jesuit High School-Carmichael

Walt Lange ranks as one of the nation's most successful cross country coaches, having guided Jesuit High School teams since 1970.

In his early career Lange served the Golden West Invitational as a selection committee member and was meet director in 1974. He put on all-comer track meets and road races in the Sacramento area in addition to being a prolific clinician and writer.

Under Lange's guidance Jesuit has won 23 Sac-Joaquin Section championships. In addition, Jesuit has nine state cross country Division 2 Boys Championships with 22 team appearances. Jesuit teams placed 9th and 4th at the Nike Cross Country team nationals in 2005 and 2006.

Lange served as head track coach for 14 seasons. Those teams won one Section championship and were runners-up twice. Walt coached seven state track champions and four silver medalists in distance events. Two Jesuit runners, Eric Mastalir (1986) and Michael Stember (1995), were named Gatorade National Track Athletes of the Year.

Many of Lange's runners have gone on to coach in Lange's footsteps. They include Scott Abbott, currently the distance and cross country coach at Sacramento State, Patrick McCrystle, coach at Bellarmine Prep. in San Jose, Mike Buckley, coach for several years at Stuart Hall High School in San Francisco, and David Welsh, coach at Texas El Paso, Boise State, and now Astoria High School. Jesuit runners who have returned as assistant coaches include Chris Little, Nate DeFelice, and Tom Witzgall. Charlie Brenneman is an active youth club coach in Rocklin. Pete McCarry has been coaching pole vault at local high schools for many years and Michael Stember and Alex Nelson did volunteer assistant coaching at UCLA and USF.

For nomination information for other Association Awards, refer to:

<http://www.psusatf.org/data/awards.html>, or e-mail awards chair Leroy Milam at Leroy1888@aol.com