

News Release



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NCC Honors

Butler, Heinitz, Mankenberg, Powell and Rhoadé To Receive NCC Honor Award

Sioux Falls, S.D. -- The North Central Conference will bestow the North Central Conference Honor Award on Vance Butler, Jim Heinitz, Cheri Mankenberg, Jack Powell and Phil Rhoadé during the NCC Honor Award Dinner Monday, May 21 at the Ramkota Hotel in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Butler and Heinitz represent Augustana College, Mankenberg represents the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Jack Powell represents the University of South Dakota while Rhoadé represents the Minnesota State University.

The award is the highest honor in the conference and is given in appreciation of their efforts to heighten the integrity of the North Central Conference. The award is voted on by the institutional representatives at each of the seven member institutions. This year's class of three brings the total number of inductees to 173 members since the award's beginning in 1967.

Tickets are available for \$30 each by contacting the North Central Conference office (605-338-0907) by Thursday, May 17.

Here is a look at each of the honorees:

Vance Butler (Augustana College) - Butler coached Augustana College track and field teams from 1984-2001. He coached nine national champions and more than 90 All-American student-athletes. Among his standouts were Debby Volkens, South Dakota's all-time record holder in the high jump, and Jeff Gross, who competed in the 400 meters at the 1984 U.S. Olympic Trials. In 1991 Butler was named the North Central Conference Indoor Track & Field Coach of the Year as the Viking men finished fifth at the NCAA Division II Indoor Track & Field Championships. The Vikings also placed fifth in 1992.

Butler graduated from Augustana in 1979. The school records he set in the 55-meter hurdles, 60-meter hurdles, 110-meter hurdles and the 400-meter hurdles still stand. He set the North Central Conference 400-meter hurdle record at 51.60 seconds, a mark that stood for 19 years. He also qualified for the NCAA Division II Outdoor Track & Field Championships in the 110-meter hurdles and 400-meter hurdles four consecutive years.

Butler was instrumental in upgrading Augustana's track and field facilities, pushing for the construction on an indoor track facility when the Elmen Center was built in 1989, and for the resurfacing of the outdoor track in 1997.

Butler was inducted into the Augustana College Athletic Hall of Fame in 1991, and into the Howard Wood Dakota Relays Hall of Fame in 1999.

He passed away on May 3, 2004 at his home in Colorado Springs, Colo. of a heart attack at the age of 47.

Jim Heinitz (Augustana College) - Jim Heinitz was the head football coach at Augustana College for 17 seasons before retiring at the conclusion of the 2004 season. He is the longest-serving head coach in Augustana's history, surpassing the legendary "Lefty" Olson in 2002. In addition, in 2003 he became the school's all-time winningest coach, again surpassing Olson. Heinitz's career record was 82-102-1.

Heinitz was named the Vikings' head coach late in 1984 and served for eight years. He resigned after the 1992 season to enter private business and then returned to Augustana in December of 1995 to resume his coaching career.

Coach Heinitz came to Augustana in 1982 as the offensive line coach. He was named head coach in November of 1984 and after patiently reconstructing the program, led the Vikings to consecutive NCAA Division II playoff appearances in 1988 and 1989.

Heinitz was named the North Central Conference Coach of the Year in 1988 and again in 1992. He was also selected as the Kodak College Coach of the Year in Region Four in those same years. The South Dakota Sportswriters Association named him Men's College Coach of the Year in 1988 and 1992.

Heinitz has coached five players who have gone on to play professional football in the National Football League and the Canadian Football League: Heath Rylance, Troy Westwood, Corbin Lacina, Bryan Schwartz and Kevin Kaesviharn. Also, numerous of his players have played for the Sioux Falls Storm of the National Indoor Football League (NIFL).

In addition to his coaching duties at Augustana, he was also involved in fundraising for the college.

Heinitz continues to be actively involved in the community. He served seven years as a member of the Brandon Valley School Board, and four years with the Board of Directors of the South Dakota High School Activities Association.

For a number of years, Heinitz was the featured speaker at Boys State in Aberdeen, S.D. He is a past member of the church council at Brandon Lutheran in Brandon, S.D., and is a past president. He has also been actively involved in the South Dakota chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and has served as its president. An engaging speaker, Heinitz has been featured at events ranging from athletic award banquets to church gatherings.

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Heinitz (Cont.)

A 1972 graduate of South Dakota State University, Heinitz was an All-North Central Conference linebacker for the Jackrabbits. He has previously served as an assistant coach at the University of Sioux Falls, Sioux Falls Washington High School, Sioux Falls Lincoln High School and was head football coach at Rapid City Stevens High School prior to joining the Augustana staff.

Jim and his wife, Becky, have three children, Stacy Scholten, Adam and Heather, along with five grandchildren, Zachary, Thomas and Samuel Scholten and Ella and Maya Heinitz. Stacy's husband, Kelly, was a standout lineman for the Vikings from 1992-1996. Adam is married to former Augustana basketball All-American, Sandra Zwach and is a member of the admissions staff at Augustana. Adam was a starting tight end for the Augie Vikings during his college career. Heather is working in Sioux Falls.

Cherri Mankenberg (University of Nebraska at Omaha) - Cherri Mankenberg was the first full-time women's coach hired at UNO in 1976 and served as the women's basketball coach at the school for 22 years. She compiled a 344-277 overall record, winning the first three women's NCC titles in 1980-82, and appearing in seven AIAW or NCAA post-season tournaments. She was named the NCC coach of the year and the regional coach of the year in 1987 and 1992.

She stepped down as head coach in 1997 to replace Connie Claussen as associate athletic director and senior woman administrator at UNO and served the school in that role until retiring in 2003.

Mankenberg was the first woman inducted into the Wayne State Hall of Fame, in 1979, and in 1985 was inducted into the Iowa Girls High School Hall of Fame. In 1998, she was inducted into the UNO Athletic Hall of Fame as well.

The Iowa native led her West Monona High School team to a state basketball title in 1964 and was an all-state selection. She went on to star at Wayne State College, leading the Wildcats to the AAU nationals. She earned her bachelor's degree in education at Wayne State in 1969 and went on to earn a master's degree from Northern Colorado in 1976.

Jack Powell (University of South Dakota) - Dr. Jack Powell's long association with USD began in 1962 when he took a position with the U's mathematics department. In 1973, he transferred to a position in the School of Business, where he served the remainder of his career. He was elected to USD's Athletic Board of Control many times by the USD Senate, and held the position of ABC chair several times during that period. He was appointed as USD's Faculty Athletic Representative to the NCC and the NCAA in 1996, and held that position for nine years. Powell has shown great propensity for community service, including serving as an alderman and also as a team host for the South Dakota High School Football Playoffs every year since it began in 1981. Since 2000, eleven student athletes have received NCAA postgraduate scholarships, in part due to the help of Professor Powell.

In addition, Dr. Powell was appointed as USD's institutional representative on the NCC Future Committee and was a member of the board of the Faculty Athletic Representatives Association (FARA), including a term as vice president for Division II. He has chaired the DII FARA Legislative Review Committee. He also completed two, three-year terms on the NCAA DII Legislation Committee, including as chair in 2006.

South Dakota athletic director, Joel Nielsen, continually mentions Dr. Powell's commitment to the student part of student-athlete and recognizes the instrumental role Jack has played in the receipt of nearly a dozen NCAA post-graduate scholarships by our student-athletes.

However, Dr. Powell's mentoring is not limited to student-athletes. Members of the Athletic Board of Control attest to Jack's willingness to answer questions and provide guidance in matters concerning athletics at our institution. Steve Johnson, who chaired the Athletic Board of Control for several years while Jack was FAR, credits Jack with helping him work through issues facing the ABC, and also mentions Jack's work on the national level in both the NCAA and FARA as providing valuable insight to the Board.

The staff at the University can attest to Jack's dedicated and loyal commitment including volunteering as a 30-second clock operator at men's and women's basketball games for the past 20 years. He also has worked as a volunteer at USD track meets, including numerous NCC championships, since the 1970s.

Dr. Powell's service to our campus does not stop with athletics. Starting in the mid 60s with his founding of the first USD Computer Center, he has contributed in many ways to the growth and improvement of our institution.

Powell received his Bachelor of Science degree from Morningside College in 1958 before earning a Master of Arts degree from USD in 1962. He later picked up his Master of Business Administration Degree in 1971 and a Doctor of Business Administration in 1972 from the University of Indiana (Bloomington).

Phil Rhoads (Minnesota State University) - Phil Rhoads served as the Head Swimming & Diving Coach at Minnesota State University from 1982-2003.

In his 21 seasons as the head coach of the Minnesota State swimming and diving programs, the Plymouth, Indiana, native coached several NCAA qualifiers and All-Americans and was named North Central Conference Coach of the Year five times (1986, 1988, 1989, 1992 and 2002).

Rhoads owned a combined dual mark of 208-142-1 (.594) during the course of his tenure at MSU. His MSU women's teams finished second in the conference five times and ranked third twice, while his men's teams garnered one second-place finish and was third on six occasions. Rhoads graduated from George Williams in 1970 and earned a master's degree from MSU in 1984.

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