



The Centre County Sports Hall of Fame
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Keith Bierly, President
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SPRING 2024 NEWSLETTER

Dear Members,

Following another record-breaking voter turnout the Centre County Sport Hall of Fame announced its 2024 Inductee Class.

Leading the way was former 3-time All-State State College High School running back Matt Suhey. Receiving more than 96% of the vote, Matt broke the record for the greatest number of votes received by any nominee since our inception in 2016.

Matt went on to start 4 years for Penn State and then played 10 years in the NFL where he teamed with Walter Payton to lead the Chicago Bears to a win in Super Bowl XX.

Two Penn State graduates followed next in the voting with Dr. Jim Martin and Steve Jones being elected. Jim is the all-time winningest wrestler in the storied Penn State program with 155 wins and captured the 126-pound NCAA championship during a career where he was named All-American 4 times.

Steve Jones has been the voice of Penn State football and basketball for decades. He also has announced the State College Spikes games since their birth. A virtual walking PSU encyclopedia, Steve, like Jim, decided to come to Penn State and STAY.

Skip Pighetti follows a list of Bald Eagle Area state champions into the Hall of Fame. His 69-5-3 career record at BEA is remarkable, and he went on to coach the Eagles for 5 years.

Amanda Breon Hamilton earned twelve letters at Bellefonte High, including four in softball where she was named All-State in 2001. She then set several school and PSAC conference records at Bloomsburg.

Greg Focht is already a member of the Pennsylvania Special Olympics Hall of Fame. Proficient in numerous sports, Greg won a silver medal at the Special Olympic Games held in Athens, Greece. Quite an accomplishment.

A pair of female Penns Valley athletes round out the eight inductees elected by the membership in 2024.

Kari Lucas Leah won sixteen letters at Penns Valley across four different sports. She excelled at softball where her All-State performance led the Rams to the PIAA state championship.

MEET OUR
INDUCTEES

Katrina Greer excelled in basketball at Penns Valley High in basketball where she scored nearly 2,000 points and was named All-State. Continuing her career at Clarion University, she set several school and PSAC records in scoring and free throw percentage.

Two Bellefonte High graduates were elected by the members in the deceased category. Both played baseball and football in high school and college. Denny Dewitt became an All-American centerfielder for the Penn State baseball team and Joe Kresovich was recruited to the University of Maryland football team by legendary ESPN icon Lee Corso.

The Hall of Fame Board on occasion names an individual to the Hall of Fame for their outstanding community service in sports.

This year Bud O'Brien is being named for his outstanding work in the Philipsburg area as an athlete, coach, announcer, and fund-raiser.

The banquet honoring these eleven outstanding individuals will be held on October 20th at The Penn Stater Conference Center.



This year for the first time the Centre County Sports Hall of Fame will participate in the Centre Foundation fund-raising event on May 8th and May 9th. The Hall of Fame will join more than two hundred non-profits during the 36-hour event which typically raises more than \$2 million. If you want to help the HOF, where all money raised during this event will go to our SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM, type in CentreGives.org and follow the instructions for donating. Since both Centre Foundation and the Hamer Foundation add money to the event - "stretch pools," your donation might exceed the amount charged to your credit card. You will receive an e-mail receipt suitable for your records and tax deduction. This is a great way to help our Centre County student athletes and could not be any easier to accomplish.

The Centre County Sports Hall of Fame has applied for a \$10,000 grant administered through the Happy Valley Adventure Bureau.

This grant is a result of the hotel tax in the county and close to \$1 million will be distributed over the course of the next year.

Last year alone, seventy-two non-profits in the county received grants. Cross your fingers that the Centre County Sports Hall of Fame joins the list in 2024.



Our annual golf outing - THE BLUE BY YOU - will once again be held at the Penn State Blue Golf Course. Get your foursome registered early (\$500) for the July 13, 2024, shotgun start at 9 AM. Once again there will be a \$20,000 hole-in-one prize offered, with numerous prizes for the top teams and top individual shots. Last year literally thousands of dollars of raffle prizes were won.

We are accepting sponsors in the amounts of \$2,500, \$1,000, \$500, \$250, and \$100. Check out our website at CentreCountySportsHOF.com for more information. It is \$125.00 per golfer to play, and we will match you up if you do not have a ready foursome. Breakfast snacks early and

an awards luncheon after play is available to all players, volunteers, and sponsors. A great time for everyone.



As previously mentioned, our annual induction banquet will be on October 20, 2024, at The Penn Stater. At Noon, the memorabilia room will open where you can speak with the inductees regarding their careers and induction. The luncheon/banquet typically lasts from 1:00 PM until about 4:00 PM with great videos of the inductees and their accomplishments. The buffet provided by the staff is incredible.

RECOGNITION

This year we plan to recognize the 25th anniversary of the 1999 National Champion Bald Eagle Area wrestling team named by USA Today and numerous other publications as the top program in the nation, the Dick Rhoades led Eagles were impressive all year long. We want to recognize this special season at our banquet. Tickets for the banquet will become available later in the year and always feel free to check out our website at CentreCountySportsHOF.com if you have any questions.



Finally, we appreciate all the support of our members, but we are always seeking new members and new nominations. Spread the word as to the great work done by the Centre County Sports Hall of Fame. This year we will again provide \$12,000 in scholarship money to outstanding senior students/athletes. Recruit a new member, consider a nomination.

DONATIONS
WELCOME

Donate to CentreGives.org, play in the golf tournament or sponsor a hole (\$100) and then finally attend our October 20th banquet.

Thank you,

Keith Bierly - President of the Centre County Sports Hall of Fame Board