



RESPECT ★ RESPONSIBILITY ★ INTEGRITY ★ SERVANT LEADERSHIP ★ SPORTSMANSHIP

APRIL 2005

Sponsored By:



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### PROGRAM CENTER TRAINING:

#### 2ND EDITION

June 6 and 7 in Kansas City, the NAIA will host its second training session for member institutions who wish to become program centers. More information will be made available in the near future but for those that have questions, please contact Ruth Feldblum at the NAIA National Office.

### CURRENT NAIA CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER PROGRAM CENTERS

Briar Cliff University, Iowa  
Campbellsville University, Ky.  
College of the Ozarks, Mo.  
Concordia University, Ore.  
Cornerstone University, Mich.  
Eastern Oregon University  
Houghton College, N.Y.  
Martin Methodist College, Tenn.  
Mid-Continent College, Ky.  
Ottawa University, Kan.  
Vanguard University, Calif.  
Warner Southern College, Fla.

### NEW NAIA LOGO BANNERS

You can now purchase the new NAIA logo banners. The vinyl banners are 4'x4' and cost \$82.00. If you would like to order one, please contact Rich at Sign Connection: (913) 768-0202.

## NAIA'S CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER PROGRAM RECEIVES SUPPORT FROM FINANCIAL SERVICES LEADER BUFFALO FUNDS

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), through financial support from Mission, Kansas based mutual fund leader Buffalo Funds, believes athletes with strong character can make a comeback through its *Champions of Character* program.

Buffalo Funds has joined the effort believing the core attributes of respect, integrity, responsibility, servant leadership and sportsmanship found in the *Champions of Character* program are critical for changing the current cycle of poor judgment reported everyday in the media.

"We believe the sports and financial worlds have both been rocked by scandal, deception and greed and both need to return to the values exhibited in the *Champions of Character* initiative," said Buffalo Funds President and CEO John Kornitzer. "We want to be part of a solution that stems the tide of eroding character and redefines the landscape of athletics and its role in developing youth."

Buffalo Funds shares the NAIA's belief that benefits of the program's core values will have an effect on every aspect of American culture, and specifically as it relates to the financial services industry. So much so, that Buffalo Funds has put their own management team through the program to enhance an already sparkling reputation within industry. The company boasts Morningstar's "A" fiduciary rating on its flagship funds for its adherence to regulatory issues, strong board of directors and low fund expenses.

"Buffalo Funds investment strategy involves identifying long-term trends that positively affect companies," said Steve Baker, the NAIA's president and CEO and former Major League player and executive. "Clearly the organization is using that same foresight to recognize the incredible long-term benefits of raising a new generation who embrace the value of strong character."

As part of its outreach mission with the *Champions of Character* program, the NAIA conducts training and motivational presentations to groups in communities throughout the nation. Special presenters Bruce Brown and Rob Miller make dynamic presentations for corporate audiences, teams, clubs, and organizations wishing to impart messages about character values impacting success. The programs include special emphasis on sharing character education with all "teams" within an organization including sports teams academic teams, and teams organized around social initiatives.

"NAIA's core values are instrumental in the development of ethics in not only sports but communities and corporate organizations," said Bruce Brown, NAIA *Champions of Character* Special Presenter. "Through our *Champions of Character* program, we are teaching people how to become more responsible athletes and citizens."



## IMPACT FROM THE BUFFALO FUNDS - NAIA DIVISION I MEN'S BASKETBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

NAIA *Champions of Character* programming took center stage at the 68th Annual Division I Men's Basketball Tournament last month in Kansas City. Approximately 4,000 local youth took part in a variety of programs; many of which included attending games at the tournament and listening to presentations on character by NAIA coaches and student-athletes. Below are a few highlights:

- ◆ Nearly 2,500 elementary and middle school students attended NAIA tournament games and participated in *Champions of Character* seminars put on by NAIA coaches and players.
- ◆ NAIA players and coaches visited sixteen area YMCAs and spoke on the five core character values to approximately 800 youth in the Kansas City area.
- ◆ Approximately 400 area high school students participated in workshops led by NAIA Director of *Champions of Character* Initiatives Rob Miller and Special Presenter Bruce Brown.
- ◆ The City of Olathe Character Council once again sponsored *Champions of Character* Awards to approximately 40 high school seniors in the Kansas City area. In addition, approximately 400 Olathe school students participated in *Champions of Character* workshops.
- ◆ Each of the 32 participating NAIA teams had a *Champions of Character* Award Winner and four of them received \$2,000 scholarships from the Pattison Family Foundation. Scholarship winners included Kory Allen, Oklahoma Christian University; Bryn Caulkins, Houston Baptist University; Blake Downing, Georgetown College; and Pat Smits, John Brown University.

**NAIA**  
**CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER**  
**APRIL/MAY/JUNE**  
**PRESENTATIONS & EVENTS**

**APRIL - 2005**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Presentation/Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
April 4	WBCA Convention	Indianapolis, Ind.
	Blue Valley Parks and Rec.	Overland Park, Kan.
April 7	Oak Grove Schools	Oak Grove, Mo.
April 11	Missouri High School AD's	Lake of the Ozarks, Mo.
April 12	St. Therese Catholic School	Parkville, Mo.
April 12-13	Culver-Stockton College	Canton, Mo.
April 14	Cornerstone University	Grand Rapids, Mich.
April 14-15	Virginia High School AD's	Virginia, Va.
April 18	Blue Valley Schools	Overland Park, Kan.
	Blue Valley Parks and Rec.	Overland Park, Kan.
April 25	Blue Valley Schools	Leawood, Kan.
April 26	Nebraska Wesleyan College	Lincoln, Neb.
April 27	Benedictine College	Atchison, Kan.
April 28	Blue Valley Schools	Overland Park, Kan.
April 29	Olathe City Character Council	Olathe, Kan.

**MAY - 2005**

May 2	Blue Valley Schools	Overland Park, Kan.
May 7	Bellingham Soccer	Bellingham, Wash.
May 10-11	Fortuna Schools	Fortuna, Calif.
May 17	Simon Fraser University	Burnaby, B.C.
May 18	Renton Schools	Renton, Wash.
May 19	Battle Ground High School	Battle Ground, Wash.
May 20	Wenatchee High School	Wenatchee, Wash.
May 23	NAIA Men's Golf Championship	Olathe, Kan.
May 31	St. Pius High School	Kansas City, Mo.

**JUNE - 2005**

June 3	NCCAA National Convention Pacific Rim Conference	Kansas City, Mo. Seattle, Wash.
June 4	CTSA Weekend	St. Louis, Mo.
June 6-7	NAIA Program Center Training	Kansas City, Mo.
June 27	Everett Coaches School	Everett, Wash.



Jessica Stollings, 2004 Dr. Leroy Walker *Champions of Character* Award Winner and Steve Baker, NAIA President and CEO at the 64th Annual NAIA National Convention Awards Luncheon, March 21, 2005.



## CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY'S LARSON NAMED 2005 DR. LEROY WALKER AWARD WINNER



*(Courtesy of Concordia Web site)*

Amanda Larsen of Concordia University (Ore.) has been selected as the recipient of the seventh annual NAIA Dr. LeRoy Walker *Champions of Character* Award, which was established to annually recognize an NAIA student-athlete who best exemplifies the qualities of scholarship, character and sportsmanship.

The Walker award was created as part of the NAIA's association with the Citizenship Through Sports Alliance (CTSA), a group including nine other member organizations from the world of sports with the aim of promoting sportsmanship. Previously named the NAIA Dr. LeRoy Walker Sportsmanship Award, the title was changed this year to further incorporate the NAIA's *Champions of Character* initiative. The award honors former United States Olympic Committee and NAIA past-president Dr. LeRoy Walker, who also was a coach and athletic administrator at Benedict College (S.C.).

Larsen, a senior co-captain for Concordia's women's volleyball team, has maintained a 3.97 GPA while majoring in secondary education. She was named a 2004 Daktronics-NAIA All-America Scholar-Athlete and earned 1st-team all-Cascade Collegiate Conference honors in 2002 and 2004. Larsen also received the school's *Champions of Character* Award this past season and was honored as the 2004 Oregon Fellowship of Christian Athletes College Athlete of the Year.

An active member of the Cavaliers' Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter, Larsen serves as an FCA Huddle Leader on campus and was a member of the FCA Summer Leadership Camp staff for the past two summers. Larsen has been an academic tutor in the Concordia math department for the past three years and is also a member of the St. Michael's Lutheran Church Praise Team.

"Amanda is respected for more than her volleyball ability," said Concordia University Athletics Director Joel Schuldheisz. "She is a dedicated and confident, yet humble leader who is committed to living out the core values of the NAIA's *Champions of Character* program."

Larsen eloquently captured the essence of both the award and her character in her nomination essay when she wrote: "Integrity is not a value that I try to live by separate from all others, but the core of who I am as I strive to adhere to my beliefs and hold myself accountable to my personal standards of conduct and performance."

Larsen will receive an engraved plaque and her name will be on a permanent display at the NAIA National Office on a plaque which honors all previous Walker Award winners. Concordia will receive a \$1,000 award for its scholarship fund, and Larsen will represent the NAIA at the CTSA Summit and Awards Dinner on June 4 in St. Louis. She will also be honored at the 2006 NAIA National Convention in San Diego.

Other finalists for the 2004-05 NAIA Dr. LeRoy Walker *Champion of Character* Award include: Marissa Cothran, Vanguard University (Calif.); Miranda Murdock, University of Mary (N.D.); Lindsay Bredar, Bellevue University (Neb.); Nic Lantz, William Woods University (Mo.); Erica Marie Ditzenberger, College of the Southwest (N.M.); Brandon Albers, William Penn University (Iowa); Elizabeth Dutt, Indiana Wesleyan University; Yuka Pearl, Ohio Dominican University; Hannah Leigh Wood, Freed-Hardeman University (Tenn.); Michael Matlock, The University of Virginia's College at Wise; Ryan Kaminski, Savannah College of Art and Design (Ga.).

# KESSLER NAMED INAUGURAL NAIA COACH OF CHARACTER AWARD WINNER



(Courtesy of Grace Web site)

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) has named Grace College (Ind.) men's basketball coach Jim Kessler as the 2004-05 Coach of Character Award winner. Kessler, currently in his 28th year at Grace, is the first recipient of this award.

Coach Kessler won his 500th career game at Grace midway through the 2004-05 season. In 1992, he led the Lancers to the NAIA Division II Men's Basketball National Championship and was named NAIA National Coach of the Year. He was inducted into the National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) Hall of Fame in 1994 and was presented the NCCAA Meritorious Service Award in 1995.

Kessler's coaching success is matched only by his commitment to serving others, living his faith and instilling those character traits in his players.

During his tenure at Grace, Kessler has taken his teams on more than a dozen international outreach basketball camps in nations such as the Bahamas, the Philippines, Egypt and Germany. Kessler and his players took part in a mission trip in Africa at the 2004 HIV/AIDS Kenyan Basketball Federation National Clinic. His teams have also conducted outreach camps with inner-city programs and on Native American reservations.

Kessler has also made extensive contributions on his campus and in the local community by organizing annual tournaments to benefit Habitat for Humanity and the Kosciusko County Cancer Fund. He has established campus projects that have raised funds for the college library as well as funds for equipment and programs aimed at enhancing the quality of life at the college. For his contributions to the lives of youth in the Warsaw community, Kessler received the 2005 Pete Thorne Memorial Award.

"Coach Kessler's life is one of servant leadership," said Grace College President Ronald Manahan. "He has led every team he has coached into service projects that teach student-athletes the absolute value of serving others and setting before others an example of service."

Kessler will be officially recognized as the 2004-05 NAIA Coach of Character on June 4th at the Citizenship Through Sports Alliance (CTSA) Awards Dinner in St. Louis and at the 65th Annual NAIA National Convention next spring in San Diego, Calif.

The following NAIA coaches have been designated as 2004-05 NAIA Coach of Character Award winners at the regional level: Katrina Meyer, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (Ariz.); Cory Anderson, Valley City State University (N.D.); Doug Martin, Dakota Wesleyan University (S.D.); Brad Bass, Wayland Baptist University (Texas); David Lewis, Houghton College (N.Y.); Donna Hawkins, Georgetown College (Ky.); Bruce Carrington, St. Thomas University (Fla.).

## CHARACTER TIPS FOR PARENTS

As youth sports teams prepare for the 2005 season, the NAIA has some tips on how parents can build an understanding of and emphasize character values in sports by emphasizing the five key core values of *Champions of Character* in their parenting.

**Respect:** It is the parent's responsibility to demonstrate respect toward everyone on the field-including athletes, coaches and all authority figures. Parents show respect with both actions and words.

**Responsibility:** It's vital that parents understand the purpose of youth sports. Positive values and life lessons can be learned and reinforced through participation in youth sports. Parents and youth coaches have a shared responsibility to teach these values and assist in the character development of America's youth.

**Integrity:** Integrity is key in the world of athletics. Trust in the basic honesty of officials to be fair and just, and respect their decisions by not attempting to bend or stretch the rules of the game. By doing this, you will be encouraging everyone involved to honor the game.

**Sportsmanship:** It is the parents' responsibility as well as the athletes' to exemplify sportsmanship. Parents can promote sportsmanship by modeling behavior they would want their child to emulate; demonstrating respect and restraint even when they disagree with decisions made, and dealing with any attitude issues away from the game.

**Servant Leadership:** Parents should be willing to support and encourage the team and its coaches in both victory and defeat. Parents become a strong support system for their athlete by asking coaches, leagues, or athletic directors what they can do to help provide a positive experience for everyone involved.

More American youth will remain active in competitive sports when participation becomes more rewarding and fun for the athletes, parents and everyone involved. That's a goal of the NAIA's *Champions of Character* program.

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**NAIA CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER SPECIAL PRESENTER**

**Q&A WITH BRUCE BROWN**

**Q:** How will the new regional Character Centers impact the NAIA's national *Champions of Character* message/initiative?

**A:** These centers will allow the NAIA to spread the message(s) of *Champions of Character* at a much faster rate. We have many outstanding people within our organization that will now be able to provide character-based leadership in the athletic arena to their region of the country. One of the main goals was to extend the *Champions of Character* example and lessons beyond our own campuses. Our institutions who have chosen to become Character Centers have made a large commitment toward that goal.

**2005 NAIA SWIMMING AND DIVING CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER AWARD WINNERS**

Jess Sheridan	Asbury College
Nate Ritchie	Asbury College
Rebecca Wickert	Berea College
JD Heffernan	Berea College
Alyssa Simonsen	Biola University
Dave Miller	Biola University
Nicole Hillwig	California Baptist University
Bobby Eastman	California Baptist University
Lisa Speer	Cal State University - Hayward
Catherine Mack	Cumberland College
Ian Wenstrand	Cumberland College
Brianna Swenson	Illinois Institute of Technology
Chris Edwards	Illinois Institute of Technology
Rebecca Camfield	John Brown University
Nik Hook	John Brown University
Katie Thompson	Lindenwood University
Dan Dasinger	Lindenwood University
Rachel Shoup	Morningside College
Laine Benthall	Savannah College of Art & Design
Seth Carlson	Savannah College of Art & Design
Suzy Brodeur	Simon Fraser University
Grant Brehaut	Simon Fraser University
Cristin Bolt	Spring Hill College
Wes Baugh	Spring Hill College
Jill Taylor	Transylvania University
Travis Graves	Transylvania University
Amber Cannon	The University of Texas - Permian Basin
Fernie Trejo	The University of Texas - Permian Basin

**2005 NAIA MEN'S DIVISION II BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER AWARD WINNERS**

Joe Green	Albertson College
Lucas Hough	Bellevue University
Vitor de Oliveira	Bluefield College
Jason Weakley	Cedarville University
Thad Sankey	Concordia University
Mike Cameron	Cornerstone University
Donover Brewer	Dominican University
Scott Bradley	Embry-Riddle University
Carmine Charles	Fisher College
Chris Crumpler	Flagler College
Kasey Littlefield	Friends University
Adam Bontreger	Huntington College
Brent Houin	Indiana University - Southeast
JuJuan Cooley	Indiana Institute of Technology
Mike Gomez	Johnson & Wales University
Justin Skjervn	Mayville State University
Brooks Butler	MidAmerica Nazarene University
Lance Allerdings	Minot State University
Matt Clark	Newman University
Grant Willis	Northwestern College
Mike Hansen	Oregon Institute of Technology
Andy Baldwin	College of the Ozarks
Nick Ferreira	St. Ambrose University
Jeffrie Mallory	St. Vincent College
Brad Coen	Southern Oregon University
Josh Wertenberger	Tabor College
Mike Parsons	Taylor University
Raphael Hafeli	Tennessee Wesleyan College
Charles Commeret	Trinity Christian College
Brandon Weems	Walsh University
Kenny Stone	Western Baptist College
Drew Mathews	William Jewell College

**2005 NAIA WOMEN'S DIVISION II BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER AWARD WINNERS**

Bethel College (IN)	Chasity Zelles	Lyndon State College	Jamie Rosso
Bethel College (TN)	Abree Haddock	University of Mary	Nicole Meier
Brevard College	Megan Russell	Morningside College	Beth Watson
Bryan College	Talor Armstrong	Oregon Tech	Kelsi Haylett
Cardinal Stritch University	Sarah Gehring	Roberts Wesleyan College	Jo Anna Patalano
Cedarville University	Crystal Stuckey	St. Francis College	Shannon Pung
College of the Ozarks	Laura Forgey	South Dakota Tech	Megan Barnes
Concordia University (NE)	Kayla Luehmann	Sterling College	Crystal Pitts
Cornerstone University	Desirae Hemmes	Tabor College	Erica Hammert
Davenport University	Karen Rugless	Taylor College	Liz Plass
Doane College	Ashley Sullwold	Viterbo University	Alyssa Kammel
Dominican College	Jeri Swanson	Warner Southern College	Katherin Mack
Evangel University	Natasha Neal	Western Baptist College	Jessica Gamma
Hastings College	Amanda McKenzie	William Jewell College	Chelsea Holmes
Holy Names College	Natalia Jonas	Daemen College	Joanna Daugenti
Indiana Wesleyan College	Courtney Cervenka		

**2005 NAIA WRESTLING CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER AWARD WINNERS**

Josh Sorum	Bacone College
Matt Palladino	Bethel College
Jason Kruse	Briar Cliff University
John Chidester	Campbellsville University
Ernie Spreitzer	Cumberland College
Jared Grindstaff	Cumberland University
Steven Wood	Dakota Wesleyan University
Blair Alderman	Dana College
Trent Kirchhefer	Dickinson State University
Adam Neesby	Embry-Riddle University
Luke Roberts	University of Great Falls
Nick Small	Jamestown College
Roger Miller	Lindenwood University
Joshua Bauer	University of Mary
Chad Willard	McKendree College
Jeff Aguilar	Menlo College
John Wilcox	Missouri Baptist University
Mario Thomas	Missouri Valley College
Aaron Jensen	Montana SU - Northern
Jake Stevenson	Morningside College
Ryan Smith	Newman University
Matt Wenninger	Northwestern College
Adam Monroe	Si Tanka University
Alexis Roumanis	Simon Fraser University
David O'Brien, Jr.	Southern Oregon University
Brad Stockton	Waldorf College
Fidel Gonzalez	William Penn University
Lewis Settle	York College

**2005 NAIA MEN'S DIVISION I BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER AWARD WINNERS**

Azusa Pacific University	Nate Pratt
Biola University	Matthew Garnett
Brescia University	Wes Johnson
California Baptist University	Ronald Bailey
Carroll College	Andy Brown
Columbia College	Aaron Edwards
Concordia University Irvine	Rocky Soliday
Cumberland College	David Morris
Faulkner University	Bryant Murray
Georgetown University	Blake Downing
Georgia Southwestern State University	Jared Ronai
Houston Baptist University	Bryn Caulkins
John Brown University	Pat Smits
Langston University	Ryan Davis
Lindsey Wilson College	Chris Evans
Lewis Clark State College	Spencer Bishop
Louisiana State University Shreveport	Abraham Saxon
Lubbock Christian University	Brandon Jones
Missouri Baptist University	Noll Billings
University of Mobile	Randy Jordan
Mountain State University	Adrian Jackson
Oklahoma Baptist University	Bailey Jones
Oklahoma Christian University	Kory Allen
Oklahoma City University	Shervon Ceromain
Robert Morris College	Sam Jackson
Saint Xavier University	Jason Reiter
Southern Polytechnic State University	Troy Sledge
Trevecca Nazarene University	Brandon Howard
Union University	Matt Trammell
Voorhees College	Randy McPhee
Westminster College	Steve Cramer
Xavier University of Louisiana	Michael Varnado

**2005 NAIA WOMEN'S DIVISION I BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS OF CHARACTER AWARD WINNERS**

Nicole Kaniki	Lee University
Becky Gray	Oklahoma Christian University
Jana Reed	Trevecca Nazarene University
Vall Wootan	Lubbock Christian University
Emily Hart	McKendree College
Mareshah Belcher	Georgetown College
Miranda Ray	Campbellsville University
Alyssa Matter	University of Montana-Western
Kendra West	Lewis Clark State College
Lacie Curry	Texas Wesleyan College
Christie Rush	Southern Nazarene University
Crystal Coston	University of Mobile
Lee Lee Cannon	Cumberland University
Sara Zembrzuzki	St. Xavier University
Danielle Smith	Azusa Pacific University
Joelle Bondelon	Loyola-New Orleans
Amy Van Doesburg	The Master's College
Tabetha Eaton	Oklahoma Baptist
Stephanie Isaacs	Cumberland College
Mindy Mitchem	Columbia College
Vanessa Tomco	Carroll College
Jamie Bonner	Indiana University-South Bend
Necy Devance	Oklahoma City University
Leticia Braswell	Brewton Parker College
Anna Dittebir	Vanguard University
Molly York	Union University
Natasha Avey	Houston Baptist University
Carla Robinson	Xavier University of Louisiana
Katie Schleisman	North Georgia State College
Hannah Wood	Freed Hardeman University
Ruth Waters	Edward Waters College
Kelsi Sousa	Point Loma Nazarene University

"This year, there were so many new levels of *Champions of Character* activities at the Buffalo Funds - NAIA Division I Men's Basketball National Championship. By far the most important was how many young kids were impacted by the players participating in the championship by their words, their actions and their willingness to share the *Champions of Character* message with these young kids." - Rob Miller, Director of *Champions of Character* Initiatives, NAIA.