

Section 3 NEWSLETTER

January
2024



Congratulations, Carlos!

Congratulations to **Carlos Cave**, CMAA/RIAA, Director of Athletics for Beaufort County Schools in Beaufort, SC, for being elected At-Large C representative to the NIAAA Board of Directors for the next three years Carlos will serve on the Board from 2024-2026.



2024 Section Dues \$200/state

2024 STATE CONFERENCES

Alabama: 2024 TBA

Florida: May 3-6, 2024 in Kissimmee, Florida at the Lake Buena Vista South Embassy Suites

Georgia: March 8-11, 2024 in Athens, GA at the Classic Center-Hyatt Hotel

Louisiana: July 16-18, 2024 in Baton Rouge, LA—Crowne Plaza

Mississippi: January 17-19, 2024 at the IP Casino in Biloxi, MS

North Carolina: March 17-19, 2024 in Asheville, NC Renaissance Hotel

South Carolina: March 9-13, 2024 in Charleston at the Marriott

Tennessee: April 12-15, 2024 in Knoxville, Tennessee at the Crowne Plaza Hotel

Congratulations, Max!

Congratulations to **Max Brames**, Florida, for being named the NIAAA Male Scholarship Recipient for 2023. Well deserved. Max wrote about the grit he gained through cross country and how high school athletics gave him opportunities to learn and grow.



Minutes Winter Meeting 2023

NADC Recap

- 2580 registrants...
- 584 First Time Attendees
- 2nd Largest Conference ever
- 57 LTI Courses Taught
- 1871 Classes Taken
- 7 New HOF Inductees



OPA Exemplary Recommendations

2023—METROLINA CHRISTIAN ACADEMY NORTH CAROLINA RONNIE PLYLER, CMAA

2023—VALOR ACADEMY TENNESSEE CAMERON HILL, CAA

2023—AUBURN HIGH SCHOOL ALABAMA DANIEL NORTON, CAA

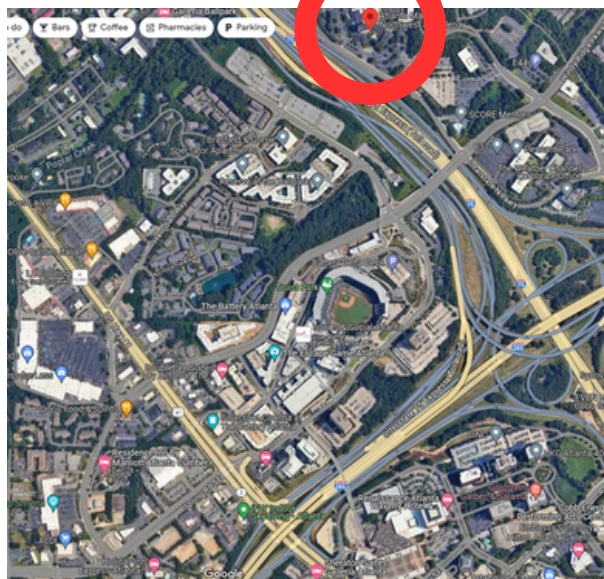
SECTION 3 SPRING MEETING



May 17-19, 2024

Atlanta Marriott Northwest at Galleria

100 Interstate North Pkwy
Atlanta, GA 30339



ROOM RATE -- \$149/NIGHT

Click the Link below to reserve your room.

[Book your group rate for Southern Region Athletic Directors Conference](#)

Tentative Schedule

Friday, May 17, 2024

1:00-5:00...LTI Class

6:00...Possible Group Outing/Dinner

Saturday, May 18, 2024

7:30-11:30...LTI Class

11:30-1:30...Lunch on your own

1:30-5:00...Section 3 Meeting

6:00 ...Braves Game (compliments of GoFan)

Sunday, May 19, 2024

8:00-8:30...SportsYou Presentation

8:30-10:30...Section 3 Meeting conclusion**

****Bring State Raffle Items for Sunday Morning**

Section 3 Membership Accommodations

Membership in the NIAAA continues to hit record numbers. As of December 17, 2023, the official membership count was **15,001**. Section 3 continues to hit high marks and will be receiving several accommodations at the national conference in December.

100% Membership

Georgia-103%
North Carolina-107%
South Carolina-189%

10% Increase in 2023

Georgia-18.3%
Mississippi-28.3%
South Carolina-15.6%

70% Membership

Georgia-103%
North Carolina-107%
South Carolina-189%
Tennessee-73%

Record Membership

Georgia-471
Louisiana-57
North Carolina-463
South Carolina-415
Tennessee-343

Membership Type

Dual States-36 (GA, NC, SC, TN)
Modified-9 (FL, MS)
State Only-6 (AL, LA)

Top 10 States

- 1) Michigan-738
- 2) New York-733
- 3) Ohio-714
- 4) Missouri-697
- 5) Indiana-633
- 6) Illinois-541
- 7) Wisconsin-575
- 8) Pennsylvania-482
- 9) Georgia-471
- 10) North Carolina-463

2024 Midyear Membership

State	2021-22 Membership	2022-23 Membership	2024 Midyear	Increase	Current Rank	Record
Alabama	75	80	78	-2	44	133 in 2002
Florida	230	197	215	+18	29	270 in 2021
Georgia	398	471	509	+38	6	471 in 2023
Louisiana	35	57	57	+25	43	57 in 2023
Mississippi	67	86	78	-5	45	139 in 2005
North Carolina	428	463	463	+26	9	463 in 2023
South Carolina	359	415	423	+8	12	415 in 2023
Tennessee	329	343	372	+29	18	343 in 2023



Congratulations Section 3

BRUCE D. WHITEHEAD DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Carlos Cave, CMAA

Bluffton, South Carolina

Carlos Cave, CMAA, has been an athletic administrator since 2005 and is currently the district athletic director of the Beaufort County School District (BCSD) in Bluffton, South Carolina. Prior to his appointment as district athletic director, Cave was athletic director of Whale Branch Early College High School for 11 years after beginning his career as a teacher and coach in the Allendale County School District.

At the state level, Cave serves on the executive board of the South Carolina Athletic Administrators Association (SCAAA) and was the association's president in 2014-15. He is an LTI coordinator and state faculty instructor, and he has been a workshop presenter at SCAAA state conferences. He also is a member of the South Carolina Football Coaches Association and the South Carolina Cross Country and Track and Field Coaches Association.

Cave also has been a major contributor to the South Carolina High School League (SCHSL) and



currently serves as vice president of the SCHSL Executive Committee.

Within the NIAAA, Cave is a Leadership Training Institute (LTI) national faculty member for Leadership Training Course (LTC) 608 and contributed to the course revision in 2022. He is also a certified test administrator and has completed more than 30 LTCs.

Cave has been a contributor to the National Athletic Directors Conference (NADC), including service on the NADC Advisory Committee. He was a member of the Blue Ribbon Panel, and he has been a presenter and state delegate on several occasions.

Among his awards, Cave has received the NIAAA State Award of Merit, SCAAA Region Athletic Director of the Year, SCAAA Classification Athletic Director of the Year and the SCAAA Statewide Athletic Director of the Year. He was also nominated several times for the SCAAA Frank Kovaleski Professional Development Award.

BRUCE D. WHITEHEAD DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Russell Wambles, CMAA

Orlando, Florida

Russell Wambles, CMAA, has been an athletic administrator in Florida for more than 25 years, including his current position as athletic director at Olympia High School in Orlando, Florida.

Wambles served two stints as athletic director at Apopka High School (from 2017-18 and 2005-11). Between his stints at Apopka, he served as athletic director at Dr. Phillips High School in Orlando, from 2011 to

2017. Previously, Wambles was athletic director and teacher at Tavares High School from 1998 to 2005, where he also coached varsity baseball.

Throughout his career, Wambles has been active at the state level serving athletic administrators and coaches. Wambles currently serves on the board of directors of the Florida Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (FIAAAA), where he was president in 2013.

Wambles also served on the board of the directors for the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSA) from 2008 to 2014. He also served one term on the FHSA Athletic Director Advisory Committee and the FHSA Repre-



sentative Assembly. Wambles was a member of the Florida Athletic Coaches Association Board of Directors for four years as well.

Wambles joined the NIAAA membership 18 years ago and has made his presence known in multiple ways. His volunteer positions include Leadership Training Institute (LTI) national faculty member, test administrator, and National Initiative and Assistance Network (NIAN) Committee member.

At the National Athletic Directors Conference, Wambles has been a state delegate for Florida six times and been a member of the National Host Committee three times from 2005 to 2015. In NIAAA Section 3 meetings, he has been a representative for Florida several times.

In 2018, Wambles earned the NIAAA State Award of Merit. He also led Apopka High School to earn the Fred Rozelle State Sportsmanship Award in 2010 and 2019. He also has received the NFHS Citation, the FIAAA Clarence Noe State Athletic Director of the Year, and the FIAAA Meritorious Service Award.

FRANK KOVALESKI PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AWARD

Lanness Robinson, CMAA

Tampa, Florida

From serving locally to being president of the NIAAA, Lanness Robinson, CMAA, has been a major contributor to the profession of high school athletic administration. He currently is the district athletic director at Hillsborough County Public Schools in Tampa, Florida, and has more than 20 years of experience as an athletic administrator.

Robinson's other involvements in the NIAAA include being a Leadership Training Institute (LTI) state coordinator since 2007, serving as an LTI national faculty member for 10 years, and helping revise several LTCs. Starting in 2022, Robinson joined the NIAAA Professional Development Academy (PDA) Leadership Team. Robinson has completed 49 NIAAA Leadership Training Courses.

Before his time as a member of the PDA staff, Robinson volunteered on the NIAAA Board of Directors for five years. His term as NIAAA president was in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. He helped the NIAAA and NFHS facilitate the annual National Athletic Directors Conference (NADC) to be a virtual conference that year.

Other involvements in the NIAAA include serving as an LTI legal course national faculty member, Fourth Strategic Planning Committee



member, Awards Committee member, course revisions/development committee member for five courses, and LTI state coordinator since 2007.

Robinson is heavily involved in the National Athletic Directors Conference (NADC), presenting at it twice and being on the Host Committee for five different conferences.

In the Florida Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (FIAAA), Robinson is the past president on the FIAAA Board of Directors and chair of the FIAAA Strategic Planning Committee. He was president in 2009-10, and he is a state LTI instructor.

At the local level, Robinson is the executive director of the National Football Foundation (NFF) Tampa Chapter. He also serves as the chair of a Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and the executive director of the Freddie Solomon Legacy Foundation. Within his school district, he has helped raise and present more than \$1 million in scholarships to student-athletes.

Robinson has been honored previously with NIAAA Bruce D. Whitehead Distinguished Service Award, NFHS Citation, FIAAA Dr. Clarence Noe Athletic Director of the Year and NIAAA State Award of Merit.

BRUCE D. WHITEHEAD DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Kelly Fish, CMAA

Brentwood, Tennessee

Kelly Fish has served on the staff at Curry Ingram Academy in Brentwood, Tennessee, since 2011. She was director of athletics for grades 5-12 for 11 years, and last year, was promoted to assistant head of school for advancement and strategic initiatives. She previously worked at Belmont University in leadership positions in both advancement and athletics.

Fish served as the membership coordinator for the Tennessee Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (TIAAA) from 2016 to 2023. During that time, the organization experienced 300-percent growth and received membership commendations from the NIAAA multiple times.

Fish teaches Leadership Training Courses for the NIAAA at the state and national levels and serves as the course chair for LTC 701. She is currently serving a two-year term as the president of the TIAAA Board of Directors (2023-25). In 2018, Fish was named one of 20 administrators and educators nationwide as a national team member of the Safe Sport Zone.



At the TIAAA State Conference in 2021, Fish presented a workshop, and she completed a Leadership Cohort within the Tennessee Association of Independent Schools (TAIS) from 2019 to 2020.

Fish joined the NIAAA membership in 2012 and has attended every National Athletic Directors Conference since. She was a member of the NADC Host Committee for both of the past two national conferences in Nashville (2016, 2022), and she was chair of last year's Host Committee.

Fish has taken 26 Leadership Training Courses (LTCs) and was a Leadership Training Institute (LTI) national faculty instructor for LTC 700. She is currently on the national faculty for LTC 701. She has been a workshop presenter several times, contributed as a Tennessee state delegate, and been a moderator for LTC sessions.

Among her awards, Fish has received the TIAAA J. Richard Carroll Leadership Award, the NIAAA State Award of Merit, and the Tennessee Bruce D. Whitehead Distinguished Service Award.

THOMAS E. FREDERICK AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Mike Elson, CMAA

Nashville, Tennessee

Mike Elson, CMAA, gave 30 years as a director of athletics before retiring a few years ago. He exemplified great dedication and spent his entire athletic administration career working at Christ Presbyterian Academy in Nashville, Tennessee.

In Christ Presbyterian Academy's third year of existence, Elson built the athletic program from scratch. He personally led and coached all athletic teams in 1987 and served as the only athletic director. He recruited volunteers to serve in the athletic booster club and athletic alliance. Elson mentored and evaluated coaches in sports including golf, cheerleading, football, basketball, soccer and more.

Elson also helped develop the sports medicine program at Christ Presbyterian. He did so with assistance from local physicians and physical therapy institutions, as well as consulting with a neurosurgeon regarding concussions.

Elson earned his Certified Athletic Administrator (CAA) designation in 2005 and his Certified Master Athletic Administrator (CMAA) designation in 2008. He has completed more than 50 Leadership Training Courses and is the chair of LTC 705 and co-chair of LTC 716. For more than 10 years, Elson served as a state coordinator for Tennessee.



Currently, Elson works with the NIAAA Professional Development Academy staff. He oversees university partnerships, the Quality Program Assessment, NIAAA-U Cohorts and new course development. Elson himself successfully completed the QPA process when he was an athletic administrator. In addition, Elson completed an NIAAA-U Cohort and has served as a mentor for others.

As a member of the Tennessee Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (TIAAA), Elson has attended more than 30 state conferences and been a TIAAA board member since 2007. He was the TIAAA newsletter editor for several years. On the TIAAA board, Elson served a term as president and currently serves as the organization's executive director.

At the National Athletic Directors Conference (NADC), Elson has been a workshop presenter and taught Leadership Training classes. At the annual NIAAA State Coordinators Summit, Elson has contributed by presenting, moderating and mentoring new coordinators. Elson served on the Host Committee for the 2022 national conference in Nashville.

Elson's honors include the NIAAA Frank Kovaleski Professional Development Award and NIAAA State Award of Merit.

2023 RECIPIENTS

Lauren Otero, CMAA

Tampa, Florida

Since her first year as an athletic director in 2009, Lauren Otero, CMAA, has quickly risen to be one of the most respected athletic administrators in Florida and the nation. After five years as athletic director of Leto High School, Otero worked as the athletic director of Plant High School for seven years before joining Hillsborough County Public Schools (HCPS) as project manager of athletic facilities in 2021.

In her current role, Otero has been a presenter at the Future Leaders Academy Assistant Principals Summer Conference, was a charter bus/travel agency bid selection committee member, a committee member of the athletics department's Guidebook of Procedures review team, co-chair of the Sports Medicine Advisory Committee and developer of the HCPS mentoring program for new athletic administrators.

At the state level, Otero served as the first female president of the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSA) Board of Directors. She also served on the FHSA Representative Assembly, was a presenter at the Compliance Seminar and served as chair of the FHSA Operations Committee.



In addition, Otero has served on the Florida Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (FIAAA) Board of Directors since 2012. During her time on the Board, she has served on the Leadership Council Committee, chaired the Audit and Review Committee, is a LTI instructor, has been a conference presenter, and currently serves as State Awards chair.

Nationally, Otero obtained her CAA distinction in her first year of NIAAA membership and then earned her CMAA certification two years later. She is currently one of two female athletic administrators in Florida who have earned a CMAA. She has been on the National Athletic Directors Conference (NADC) Host Committee and was serving as chair of the Host Committee for the 2020 NADC in Tampa until it had to be cancelled due to the pandemic.

Otero is a National Faculty member, served on the NIAAA Awards Committee, has been a Florida delegate and was a member of the Finance Subcommittee for the NIAAA's 5th Strategic Plan. She currently serves as the secretary of the NIAAA Board of Directors.

NIAAA Awards – Key Deadlines

- **Student Scholarship/Essay**
Due to State NIAAA Liaison prior to Spring Section Meeting (varies by section)
- **Frank Kovalski Professional Development Award**
Due to NIAAA Board Section Rep a minimum of one week prior to Spring Section Meeting (varies by section). **Will be done through FinalForms this year.**
- **Bruce D. Whitehead Distinguished Service Award**
Due to NIAAA by April 1
- **NFHS Citation**
Due to NIAAA by April 1
- **Hall of Fame**
Due to NIAAA by July 1
- **State Award of Merit**
Due to NIAAA on a rolling basis; Must be in by October 1 for inclusion in Winter *IAA Magazine*



NIAAA Membership Database Transition

Feb. 29, 2024



FINALFORMS

ENDOWMENT

Grants

\$1000 every 3 years

Outreach

LTCs

Membership

National Conference



Future NADC Sites

LTC Webinar Schedule - 2024

click image for link to NIAAA LTI page

Spring 2024 6:00-10:00p ET	Summer 2024 1:00-5:00p ET	Fall 2024 6:00-10:00p ET
LTC 706 – February 26	LTC 799 – July 15	LTC 799 – October 21
LTC 511 – February 27	LTC 700 – July 16	LTC 716 – October 22
LTC 627 – February 28	LTC 617 – July 17	LTC 705 – October 23
LTC 790 – February 29	LTC 701 – July 18	LTC 790 – October 24
LTC 631 – March 4	LTC 726 – July 22	LTC 638 – October 28
LTC 601 – March 5	LTC 633 – July 23	LTC 719 – October 29
LTC 717 – March 7	LTC 707 – July 24	LTC 712 – October 30
LTC 716 – March 11	LTC 626 – July 25	LTC 628 – November 4
LTC 704 – March 12	LTC 715 – July 29	LTC 608 – November 5
LTC 638 – March 13	LTC 707 – July 30	LTC 706 – November 6
LTC 608 – March 14	LTC 723 – July 31	LTC 704 – November 7
LTC 603 – March 18		
LTC 628 – March 19		
LTC 799 – March 20		
LTC 709 – March 21		

NIAAA VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES

[submit application](#)

The NIAAA organization structure includes numerous committees that manage many of the tasks of the organization. NIAAA members may serve the organization as a member of one of these committees. At each summer board of directors meeting, persons are selected from a pool and invited to serve on a committee. The committee pool includes those who have forwarded a completed committee application to the NIAAA Secretary or to the NIAAA office. All committee applications remain in the committee pool for three years.

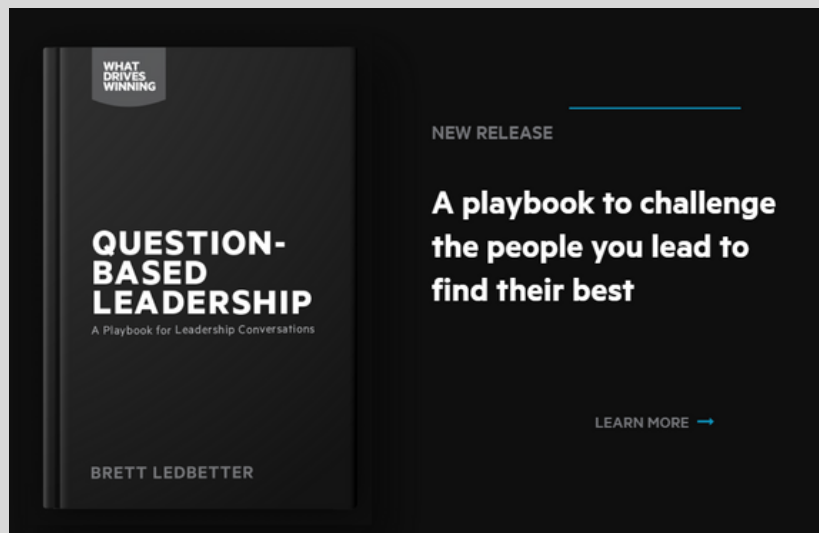
Sect. 3 Board Rep. Goals ('23-'25)

- 1) Attend each state conference within Section 3 at least once
- 2) Support each state in their efforts to have increasing membership
- 3) Establish a sustainable 'organization' where our section operates as a collective professional body within the NIAAA both financially and professionally
- 4) Increase communication of NIAAA news to the Section 3 states
- 5) Share NIAAA good practices with the GADA and other state associations to help move the state organizations forward

VIDEO of the MONTH:
[Rece Davis Interview with Nick Saban](#)



BOOK of the MONTH:
What Drives Winning, Question-Based Leadership



QUOTE of the MONTH:
**“The days you are the most uncomfortable
are the days you learn the most about yourself.
--Mary L. Bean**

Thank you to FLORIDA for hosting the 2023 NADC!



Fantastic Job! Well Done!



Join **NIAAA Section 3 Membership**
with your unique access code below.

AL, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN

UYWL-PBSG

