



***2026 CAS-CIAC
HALL OF HONOR
INDUCTION CEREMONY***

**APRIL 22, 2026
TPC RIVER HIGHLANDS | CROMWELL, CT**



THE CAS-CTAC HALL OF HONOR WAS ESTABLISHED TO HONOR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT LONG-TERM CONTRIBUTIONS TO CAS-CTAC AND THE BROADER REALMS OF EDUCATION AND ATHLETICS.

CANDIDATES FOR INDUCTION ARE CONSIDERED FOR THEIR EFFORTS IN ONE OR MORE OF SEVEN CATEGORIES:

- EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
- ATHLETIC LEADERSHIP
- FRIEND OF EDUCATION
- CONTRIBUTION TO EDUCATION
- CONTRIBUTION TO ATHLETICS
- SERVICE TO EDUCATION
- SERVICE TO ATHLETICS

Evening Program

OPENING REMARKS & HONOREE INTRODUCTIONS

DR. GLENN LUNGARINI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CAS-CIAC

INVOCATION

HENRY RONDON
ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CAS-CIAC



HALL OF HONOR INDUCTION

JOHN HOLT
MEDIA DIRECTOR, CAS-CIAC

INDUCTEES

ANTHONY "BUTCH" AZZARA
DENNIS CARRITHERS (NOT PRESENT)
ROBERT HALE
GEORGE HALL
DR. BETH SMITH
DONNA VAVRINEC
DR. LEROY WILLIAMS

CLOSING REMARKS

DR. GLENN LUNGARINI

**TO VIEW OR SHARE THE 2026 CAS-CIAC HALL OF HONOR
INDUCTEE VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE, SCAN THIS CODE WITH YOUR
PHONE'S CAMERA AND FOLLOW THE LINK.
VIDEOS WILL BE AVAILABLE AFTER TONIGHT'S EVENT.**

VIDEOS



[HTTPS://CASCL.AC/12954](https://cascl.ac/12954)

**TO VIEW PHOTOS FROM TONIGHT'S EVENT ON THE CIAC WEBSITE,
SCAN THIS CODE WITH YOUR PHONE'S CAMERA AND FOLLOW THE LINK.
PHOTOS WILL BE AVAILABLE AFTER TONIGHT'S EVENT.**

PHOTOS



[HTTPS://CASCL.AC/12953](https://cascl.ac/12953)

2026 CAS-CIAC HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEE



Anthony "Butch" Azzara

Anthony "Butch" Azzara is a native of Waterbury. He grew up in the upper Hill Street section of Waterbury attending Mary Abbott Grammar School. He graduated from Sacred Heart High School in 1967 where he played varsity football, basketball and baseball. He was a member of the 1967 Class L State Championship basketball team and earned All-Valley honors in baseball his junior and senior years. He attended Fairfield University where he continued his education and baseball career, graduating in 1971. He earned a master's degree in administration and supervision from Fairfield University in 1979 and a sixth-year certificate from Central Connecticut State University in Administration in 1985.

Butch began his teaching and coaching career in 1974 in the City of Waterbury as a math teacher at Kennedy High School. In 1986 he became a high school administrator at Crosby High School where he served as an assistant principal for ten years. In 1996 he returned to Kennedy High School as principal where he served until his retirement in 2007. As principal he, along with a dedicated staff, created the SOAR Program (school within a school) which still exists today for dedicated high achieving students. Upon retirement, Butch went on to work at Woodland Regional High School (Prospect) as an administrative consultant supervising student support services from 2007 until 2010. In 2010, he had the opportunity to return to his alma mater Sacred Heart High School as principal and served eleven years until the school closed in 2021.

Butch is a member of the Connecticut Educational Association, the School Administrators of Waterbury, the Connecticut Association of Schools, and the Connecticut High School Coaches Association.

Butch has had a 45-year association with the CIAC. As a player, he was a member of the 1967 Class L championship basketball team. As a coach, he led Crosby High School to the finals of the class LL state baseball tournament (1984), the first Waterbury team in twenty-seven years to advance that far. Butch also coached the Connecticut District III All Star team against Massachusetts in 1986. As an official he worked CIAC girls basketball games from 1986-1999, working the LL finals in 1991 as an alternate, and the 1992 LL finals.

As an administrator Butch has served on several Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CIAC) committees: UCAAP Mentor (2006-2007); CIAC Board of Control, (2003-2021, Treasurer, Vice Chair), Chairman 2017- 2021); CIAC Urban High School Steering Committee (2002-2007); CIAC Cooperative Team Committee (2005- 2021 Chairman 2019-2021); CIAC Baseball Committee (1994- 2021 Chairman 2003-2021); CIAC Boys Basketball Committee (1998-2021 Chairman 2011-2021) and the Section 1 representative to the NFHS National Baseball Committee. He also served on the University of Connecticut Community Advisory Board (2003-2005); the Executive Board – School Administrators of Waterbury (2003-2007) and is also a member of Phi Beta Kappa International.

During his long career, Butch has been the recipient of several awards. He has received the Connecticut PTA "Spirit of PTA Award" (2002), the Sacred Heart High School Varsity Club Award (2003), the Olympian Club Award (2003), CBCBO Officials' Distinguished Service Award (2003), the Anderson Boys' Club Educational Award (2007), the "Italian Mayor for the Day" in commemoration of Columbus Day (2007), the CIAC Boys Basketball Tournament Dedication Award (2009), the Exchange Club Education Leader Award in (2012), the Connecticut Association of Schools Award for Excellence (2013), and the Rivera Family Foundation Distinguished Educator Award (2014).

Butch currently lives in Naples, Florida with Patti, his wife of 52 years. He has two married sons, Steven and his wife Meghan, Christopher and his wife Lori, and four grandchildren – Michael, Mia, Luca and Luciana.

Anthony "Butch" Azzara



Robert Hale



2026 CAS-CIAC HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEE

Robert Hale



Bob Hale distinguished himself as an exceptional educator over a 38-year career dedicated to students and schools across Connecticut. He began as a music teacher, gaining experience at nearly every grade level. For almost a decade, he served as band director at The Morgan School in Clinton before moving into administration as assistant principal. In 1994, he was appointed principal of Westbrook High School, where he led the school community for twenty years until his retirement.

Bob became actively involved with CAS and CIAC as soon as he entered school leadership. He first served on the High School Program Committee and the Field Hockey Committee, and his service quickly expanded to include the Arts Committee, the Principals' Technology Committee, and the Awards and Recognition Committee. He also held numerous roles on the CIAC Board of Control, including four years as chair. In recognition of his leadership and service, Bob received both a CAS Letter of Commendation and a CAS Citation, and in 2006 was named CAS High School Principal of the Year. Bob was a participant in the Connecticut-Shandong Province (China) Exchange Program and hosted many Chinese educators at home and at school. A respected leader beyond his own district, Bob frequently participated in NEASC visiting committees and often chaired school evaluation teams.

Following his retirement from public education, Bob enthusiastically joined the staff of the CIAC/Special Olympics Unified Sports program. Unified Sports holds a special place in his heart, reflecting his deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion for all students. In 2025, he was honored with the Special Olympics Connecticut President's Award, and the CIAC Basketball Tournament was dedicated to him and the Unified Sports team.

Outside of education, Bob is an active member of the United Methodist Church of Clinton. For over thirty years he has served as both Director of the Chancel Choir and Lay Leader of the congregation. He also sings with the Shoreline Chorale and the Methodaires barbershop quartet. A lifelong enthusiast of all things magical, Bob is president of the New London Society of Magicians, maintains a museum of magic in his home, and performs throughout the state, frequently at Mohegan Sun.

Above all, his most cherished role is being "Ubby" to his five wonderful grandchildren.

2026 CAS-CIAC HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEE

George Hall



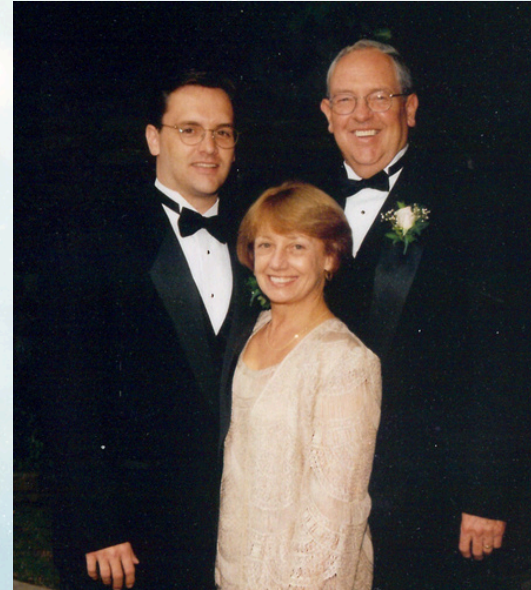
George Hall was the proud 23-year athletic director at Berlin High School, adding 14 varsity sports during his tenure. In 1998, he was selected as the CIAC High School Athletic Director of the Year. He was a charter member of the Connecticut Association of Athletic Directors (CAAD), and in 1999 received the organization's Athletic Directors Distinguished Service Award. From 1995 until 2001, Hall served as the Executive Director of the Northwest Conference.

Before his AD role, George was a dedicated social studies teacher, and coach at BHS - coaching five different sports for the Redcoats, four as head coach (girls basketball, boys basketball, girls tennis and boys tennis). In 1986, he was named the Girls Tennis State Coach of the Year. During his time coaching girls basketball at Berlin High School, his teams won a school and Northwest Conference record 37 consecutive conference games. In his 24 years coaching, Hall's teams won a total of 399 games and eight Northwest Conference championships.

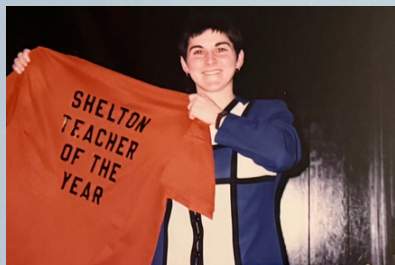
He served on various CAS-CIAC committees from 1985 to 2001 and joined the central office staff in 2001. Hall was the first athletic director ever hired by the CIAC to serve as assistant executive director with a focus on tournament development and Unified Sports. He gave unrivaled service to the organization as the CIAC Ice Hockey Tournament Director for 20 years.

George is appreciative of his wife Joyce for allowing him the time to serve the high school sports community. He views the CIAC staff he worked with as some of the greatest professionals he has encountered. Hall is especially thankful to the members of the CIAC Ice Hockey Committee who dedicated the CIAC Ice Hockey State Tournament in Hall's honor in 2023.

George Hall



Dr. Beth Smith



2026 CAS-CIAC HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEE

Dr. Beth Smith



From her early years volunteering at a summer camp for children with special needs while in junior high school, Dr. Beth A. Smith knew she was called to a career in special education. She earned her bachelor's degree from St. Joseph College, her master's degree from Southern Connecticut State University, and her doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Connecticut.

Dr. Smith began her career as a special education teacher at Shelton High School, where she also served as an advisor to numerous student clubs and as assistant varsity softball coach. In recognition of her exceptional work, she was named the district's Teacher of the Year in 1999. After several years as department chairperson, she transitioned into school leadership, serving as assistant principal at Wethersfield High School for five years and later as house principal at Newington High School. In 2008, she returned to Shelton High School as headmaster, a position she held for eleven years. She concluded her distinguished 35-year career in public education as director of special education and support services and interim superintendent of schools.

Throughout her career, Dr. Smith has provided professional learning at the local, state, national, and international levels. A well-respected leader in Connecticut's educational community, she has served on numerous local and state boards advising on policy, student achievement, athletics, and project-based learning. Her willingness to adapt to the evolving demands of a global society reflects both her leadership spirit and her unwavering commitment to students. Known for her tenacity and forward-thinking approach, Dr. Smith has consistently challenged educators to rethink and reimagine 21st-century learning experiences in ways that meet the needs of all learners.

Dr. Smith has served on nearly every committee within CAS-CIAC. Her CAS service includes the Nominating Committee; Connected Educator Committee; Products and Services, Inc.; Board of Directors (Treasurer); Governors' Scholar Committee; Hall of Honor Selection Committee; Exemplary Educator Selection Committee; High School Board of Control (Chairperson); Student Activities Board; Assistant Principals' Committee (Chairperson); and New Administrator Mentor Program. She also represented CAS on the Connecticut Teacher of the Year Selection Committee. Her CIAC service includes Board of Control Treasurer; Eligibility Review Board Chairperson; and Scholar-Athlete Steering Committee Member. Dr. Smith received a CAS Letter of Commendation in 2013 and the prestigious CAS Citation in 2017. In 2019, she served as a CAS delegate in Washington, DC, advocating with Congressional representatives on educational issues. She remains active on the CIAC Softball Committee and continues to serve as Michael's Cup Committee Chairperson and CAS Executive Coach.

Widely recognized as a high-energy, high-performing, and highly respected leader, Dr. Smith is known for her no-nonsense approach, meticulous preparation, and genuine concern for outcomes. Principled and courageous, she has never shied away from difficult conversations or controversial issues. Her ability to think independently, examine multiple perspectives, and challenge assumptions—always in service of improving opportunities for students—has distinguished her leadership throughout her career. Dr. Smith's intrepid and impactful service as an educator and administrator is both admirable and enduring.

2026 CAS-CIAC HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEE

Donna Vavrinec



Donna Vavrinec is a retired Norwalk High School Physical Science teacher, field hockey coach, and field hockey, basketball and softball official with over 40 years of experience. She attended Notre Dame High School in Bridgeport and graduated from Plymouth State College in New Hampshire.

Donna has over 50 years of accumulated experience as a referee for basketball, field hockey and softball, and her career is marked by extraordinary milestones across multiple disciplines.

She started her officiating career as a high school basketball official in 1971. She served as a CIAC Basketball State Tournament official from 1981-1990 and officiated at the collegiate level from 1989-1996, working for several different conferences at the Division I, II and III level which included NCAA Regional Division I and III tournaments. As a member of USA Basketball, Donna was selected in 1996 to officiate the USA Olympic Trails.

Softball is where Donna's officiating career took off. Her professionalism and unsurpassed knowledge and understanding the game earned her a reputation as one of the premier fast pitch officials in the nation. Donna was selected to work 4 Division I NCAA National Championships, along with 2 Division II and 8 Division III NCAA National championships.

Her scholastic softball resume includes officiating many conference and CIAC state tournament championships games. She served on the CIAC Softball Committee where she assigned tournament umpires and worked with the committee to improve communication with coaches and umpires. In 2011 Donna was hired as the NCAA Softball National Coordinator where for 8 years she had the opportunity to expand the softball manual that provided umpires with the necessary tools and resources to improve their officiating performance.

Donna is currently the chairperson of the Connecticut Field Hockey Board of Officials. She has served as a CIAC state tournament official for over 25 years and has also officiated on the collegiate level. Prior to becoming chair, Donna was a member of the executive board in charge of training and development of officials. For her devotion to the sport she was named "Umpire of the Year" in 2009.

Donna has been inducted into the Connecticut Field Hockey Hall of Fame, the Connecticut Scholastic and Collegiate Hall of Fame, and the Connecticut Women's Basketball Hall of Fame.

Donna Vavrinec



Dr. Leroy Williams



2026 CAS-CIAC HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEE

Dr. Leroy Williams



Dr. Leroy Williams has dedicated his entire professional career to serving the students of New Haven as a teacher, coach, assistant principal and principal. As a student, he attended New Haven schools where he was a football and track & field captain at Wilbur Cross High School before moving on to the University of Connecticut where he was Honorable Mention All-East in football in 1975. Upon graduating in 1976, he would return to the Elm City to pursue a career in education. Beginning as a special education teacher at the middle school and high school levels, Williams would rise to administrative positions including assistant principal and principal at the

elementary and high school levels. He would also serve students as a coach, including as Head Football Coach at Lee High School in New Haven from 1978-1985.

Through the years, Williams has been honored with numerous awards and recognitions. Among those are a 2026 Education Citation from the State of Connecticut, the New Haven Public Schools Athletic Department's Martin Luther King Jr. Award, and being named Man of the Year by National Business and Professional Clubs, Inc.

His career in education, and high school athletics, has made him a trusted mentor and ally to student-athletes in Greater New Haven and statewide across Connecticut, for nearly half a century. That service includes a position on the CIAC Football Committee since 1986, serving as Chair of the Committee from 1998 through the 2024-2025 school year. During his term as chairperson, Dr. Williams oversaw many important changes in Connecticut high school football which included concussion safety protocols, reduction in full contact among high school athletes, and the creation of six divisions. He also had a term as the Region I representative on the National Federation of State High School Association's (NFHS) Football Rules Committee.

To recognize Dr. Williams' service, the CIAC dedicated the 2025 CIAC Football State Tournament in his honor. His service to the CIAC Football Committee continues to this day as a consultant.

PAST HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEES

2015-2016



Rose Marie Carlucci



Robert F. Carroll



Suzi D'Annolfo



Timothy S. Doyle



Robert Duncanson



John Fontana



Don Gates



Ann Malafronte



Michael H. Savage

2016-2017



Katharine Bishop



Robert Cecchini



Alvah R. Cramer



Raymond Faustich



Thomas R. Monahan



Charles Sharos



Ivan L. Wood

2017-2018



Michael F. Buckley



Beau Doherty



Joseph Fontana



David Leete



Larry McHugh

2018-2019



Jerry Auclair



William H. Baron



Alan Bookman



Jean Kenney Daly



John Daly



George J. Ford



J. Robert Ford



Paul R. Hoey



Pat Llodra



Barbara J. Startup

PAST HALL OF HONOR INDUCTEES

2019-2020



Earle C. Bidwell



D. Harold Goldberg



Arthur Kohs



Tom Murray



Armand Regalbuti



George Synnott



Margaret Williamson

2022-2023



Armond Fabbri



Dr. Robert Lehr



Dr. Karissa Niehoff



Louis Pear



Michael Rafferty



Joseph Tonelli

2023-2024



Joseph Canzanella



Dave Johnson



Dr. V. Everett Lyons Jr.



Dave Maloney



Dr. RoseAnne
O'Brien Vojtek



Dr. Steven Wysowski

2024-2025



Bill Barney



Jay Kelleher



Dr. Gladys Labas



Tom Malin



Paul Mengold



Tony Mosa



Lev Torgerson

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