

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

South Dakota Girls Soccer Coach Selected as Section 5 Recipient of NFHS National High School Spirit of Sport Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: John Gillis

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (March 12, 2019) — **Desiree Parmenter**, a girls soccer coach at Harrisburg (South Dakota) High School, has been selected as the Section 5 recipient of the “National High School Spirit of Sport Award” by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).

The National High School Spirit of Sport Award was created by the NFHS to recognize those individuals who exemplify the ideals of the spirit of sport that represent the core mission of education-based athletics.

For the past three years, Parmenter has been the girls soccer coach at Harrisburg High School. While she is a talented and successful coach, she might have elevated the Tigers program even more through various community events and other bonding experiences. Among those, the team served at Harrisburg Food Pantry and the Ronald McDonald House.

However, the greatest impact might have been made by their new program called “Player of the Game.” The event is designed to recognize a player at each home game. It is unique as it integrates students with disabilities and provides them the opportunity to share their passion with the players and families. Each player received a customized jersey and soccer ball that was signed by the players. All players of the game participated in the walk-out with the starting lineup and were announced along with the starters.

Another of the significant things that the team did was honoring and celebrating the life of 12-year-old Brayden Mager during his fight to receive a heart transplant. Mager was chosen to be “Player of the Game” at Harrisburg’s homecoming, but was unable to attend as he was traveling to Michigan for a

heart transplant. His contagious smile and passion for soccer were memorable, and he served as a source of inspiration to the entire community. The team chose to play for Mager in numerous away games and presented him the symbol of Superman, which was one of his favorite things. Tragically, Mager passed away.

About the Award

The NFHS divides the nation into eight geographical sections. The states in Section 5 are South Dakota, North Dakota, Minnesota, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri.

Nominations for this award were generated through NFHS member state associations and reviewed by the NFHS Spirit of Sport Award Selection Committee composed of state association staff members.

While the national winner will be recognized June 29 at the NFHS Summer Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, the section winners will be recognized within their respective states and will receive awards before the end of the current school year.

###

About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and fine arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and fine arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,000 high schools and 11 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.9 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; produces publications for high school coaches, officials and athletic directors; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, spirit coaches, speech and debate coaches and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at www.nfhs.org.

MEDIA CONTACT:

John Gillis, 317-972-6900
National Federation of State High School Associations
PO Box 690, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206
jgillis@nfhs.org