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FROM SOUTH JERSEY TO YOU

Athletic trainer honored for service

By KEVIN CALLAHAN • Courier-Post Staff • July 27, 2010

PINE HILL — Stephen Bair, a longtime athletic trainer at Overbrook High School, didn't look at his job as just taping ankles and icing injuries.

He looked after the student-athletes.

"Every one of the athletes is someone's kid," said Bair, "and for four hours a day you are the one looking out for their well-being."

Bair, 61, did his job so well for so long he was selected by the National Athletic Trainers' Association Research & Education Foundation as the 2010 Volunteer Service Award recipient and the Tim Kerin Award recipient for excellence in athletic training.

The Collingswood resident received the first award at the NATA Foundation 2010 Donor Reception -- Night of 1000 Stars on June 23 at The Fels Planetarium at The Franklin Institute in Philadelphia.

The Volunteer Service Award is given to a current NATA Foundation board or committee member who has provided significant advancement or financial growth to the organization.

"There is no one more deserving of this honor than Steve Bair," said Jeff Ryan, chief operating officer at the Hahnemann University Hospital Physician Practice Plan and a member of the NATA Foundation Board of Directors. "He is a mentor, a friend and a role model to many of us who studied to be athletic trainers and to the athletes and coaches he has worked with over the years. Bair has definitely left his mark on the sports medicine community."

Two nights later, Bair received the Kerin Award in conjunction with the NATA Annual Meeting & Clinical Symposia.

"The Kerin award was a real surprise to me," Bair said.

Bair's career as an athletic trainer at Overbrook began in 1988 as head athletic trainer. He retired in

January because of cardiac-related health issues.

"I didn't want to do a disservice to the kids," he said. "I wasn't anywhere near as good of an athletic trainer as I was 10 years ago."

Before arriving at Overbrook, Bair served as the assistant trainer and then head trainer at Temple University.

At Temple and at Overbrook, he worked with future pro athletes.

"And I was cut from my seventh-grade team," said Bair, who went to high school in Indiana.

In his retirement, Bair has started a business, Bair Essentials, which specializes in matching people and projects in the athletic health care marketplace.

Reach Kevin Callahan at (856) 317-7821 or kcallahan@gannett.com.

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Stephen Bair (Photo provided)

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