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Bergen County Sports Medicine Physician To Receive Athletic Trainers' Society's Highest Honor Posthumously

Physician tended to athletes from numerous local high schools, as well as from New Jersey Nets and other professional teams

FEBRUARY 17, 2009 - The Athletic Trainers' Society of New Jersey (ATSNJ) is honoring the late Dr. John J. Sonzogni, Jr., a sports medicine physician, with its Presidential Award at its March 2nd annual conference. Dr. Sonzogni died after a brief illness in December 2008 at the age of 52.

"John exemplified the best of the sports medicine profession," said Dr. Robb Rehberg, ATSNJ president. "He was a true professional who dedicated himself to the athletes he served. Moreover, he was a great mentor, colleague, and friend to the many athletic trainers with whom he worked. This is why the Athletic Trainers Society of New Jersey chose to honor him."

A lifelong Bergen County resident, Dr. Sonzogni maintained offices for his practice, Professional Sports Medicine Associates, in Emerson, Elmwood Park and Nanuet, NY. He was a sports medicine physician for over a dozen high school teams and was the former team doctor for the New Jersey Nets. He tended to athletes from Westwood, Passaic, Emerson, and Ridgefield Park high schools, among many others. He served on the Medical Advisory Committee of the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association, and had also been affiliated with the New York/New Jersey MetroStars of Major League Soccer, the World

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Indoor Football League), and the New Jersey Skycats (American Basketball Association). He also served as chief medical consultant for NBA management and officials, as an assistant team physician for the New York Giants, and as a medical consultant for both Ringling Brothers & Barnum Bailey Circus and Ice Capades.

A strong advocate of athletic health care for young athletes, Dr.Sonzogni was instrumental in persuading area high schools to establish athletic training programs. "John really understood the value of athletic trainers and the role they play in prevention and care of injuries" said Rehberg, who worked with Sonzogni for many years as the athletic trainer at Westwood Regional High School. "His contributions to athletic training and sports medicine in New Jersey will not soon be forgotten."

ABOUT THE MARCH 2 CONFERENCE OF THE ATHLETIC TRAINERS' SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY

The ATSNJ is holding its twenty-third annual sports medicine conference on March 2nd at the Holiday Inn National Conference Center in East Windsor. In addition to the ATSNJ Awards Luncheon, the conference includes educational sessions, the ATSNJ annual business meeting, well as the State of the Society Address given by the ATSNJ's president.

ATSNJ consists of Licensed Athletic Trainers, physicians and other allied health care professionals whose goal is to promote quality healthcare for athletes in any setting.

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