



CIF/CENTRAL COAST SECTION

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**CENTRAL COAST SECTION COACHES HONORED BY COLLEAGUES:
SELECTED AS 2006-07 CCS WINTER SPORTS HONOR COACHES**

The CIF-Central Coast Section has announced the following recipients of the **2006-07 CCS Winter Sports Honor Coaches Awards** :

Boys Basketball:	Mitch Priest , Santa Teresa HS
Girls Basketball:	Mike Gutierrez , Mercy HS-San Francisco
Girls Soccer:	Anna Thomas , Santa Teresa HS
Wrestling:	Anthony Palomino , Independence HS

These fine coaches were selected by their Central Coast Section colleagues to be recognized during the current 2006-07 Winter season.

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Mitch Priest has been the Head Boys Basketball Coach at Santa Teresa HS in San Jose for the past six years. Prior to coaching at Santa Teresa, he was Gunderson HS's Boys Varsity Basketball Coach for nine years, and San Jose HS's Boys Frosh/Soph Basketball Coach for two years. In addition to coaching Basketball at the high school level, Mitch has been coaching age-group teams out in the community since 1999.

Santa Teresa HS Athletic Director Barbara Uchiyama says of him: "Mitch is known as a very serious coach who clearly defines his role in leading his team. His team appreciates this, because they know that he wants them to develop their skills to the highest level possible and understand that their serious dedication is vital to meet that end. ...As the athletic director I have appreciated the extra time and effort he has taken outside of his season to promote his sport and our school."

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Michael Gutierrez has been coaching at Mercy HS in San Francisco since 1994, when he began as the school's Head Varsity Tennis Coach. In 1999, he became Mercy's Frosh Basketball Coach, then took over the Varsity program in 2002, and is the current Head Basketball Coach. Before coming to Mercy HS, Mike coached "lightweight" Basketball at Jefferson HS from 1986 to 1990.

Mike has been dedicated to his sport for more than two decades, serving as a highly regarded Basketball official for more than 25 years. During his officiating tenure, he worked at several levels, including community, State and National, as not only a game official, but as an assignor and State CIF Rules Interpreter as well. Outside of high school coaching, Mike continues to offer his assistance with Special Olympics Basketball, and, for six years, was affiliated with the US Tennis Association at the Regional and National levels.

Mercy High School Principal Dotty McCrea states: "...there is no more eligible, qualified or deserving person for this award. Any words of wisdom, platitude or educational slogan could not capture the essence of Mike the coach; or Mike the person. He is most deserving of this award not only for his skills as a coach but for his presence as a well respected individual who always makes us proud to have as a member of our school community."

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Anna Scott Thomas has been the Varsity Soccer Coach at Santa Teresa HS in San Jose since 2000. Prior to coaching at Santa Teresa, she coached Soccer and Badminton for four years at Gilroy HS. Anna has also been able to experience many wonderful years at the international level of her sport, coaching Boys teams from the United Arab Emirates and Girls teams in Bulgaria and traveling to Malaysia to run Soccer camps for girls. She played semi-pro Soccer in the Bay Area during the 1996 and 1998 seasons, played in Bulgaria in 1997, and was selected to the First-Team Academic All-America during the 1986 season at Colorado College.

Kelly Daugherty, Associate Principal at Santa Teresa HS, says of her: "Anna sets high expectations, instills confidence and creates a sense of pride in all her athletes. ...If all coaches were as dedicated, and inspirational as Anna, every high school athlete would leave feeling confident, and have the skills to be a positive role model in society."

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Anthony Palomino has been coaching the Wrestling team at Independence HS from 1989-2001, and then from 2004 to the present. He has led his team to several League and Section Championships, and his 1995 Independence HS Wrestling team earned a State CIF title in 1995 as well as being ranked 5th in the Nation by USA Wrestling magazine. Out in the community, Anthony was a quite successful and long-time coach for a private Wrestling club, with his wrestlers taking several State titles in Greco-Roman and Freestyle Championships.

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The **Central Coast Section Honor Coach Award** is presented to those coaches who their colleagues believe have made outstanding contributions to that sport at their school, within their League, in the community and to the CCS. At the time of nomination, they must be actively coaching and have been coaching their respective sport for a minimum of five years at the varsity level. Attributes considered are maintenance of professional standards of conduct, general service to the respective sport, outstanding coaching accomplishments, additional contributions to school and community and being a role model and inspiration to athletes, coaches, teachers, administrators, parents and public.

Mitch Priest, Mike Gutierrez, Anna Thomas and Anthony Palomino were nominated by their respective high schools as embodiments of these qualities. Winter Honor Coach Award recipients will be recognized at the CCS Board of Managers meeting at the Los Gatos Lodge in Los Gatos on January 25, 2007.