

MIAC Exec. Director McKane honored with 2014-15 MIAC Mike Augustin Award

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BLOOMINGTON, Minn. -- Dan McKane was hired as the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference's (MIAC) first full-time assistant executive director in 1999, which was the same year the conference began presenting the MIAC Mike Augustin Award to honor outstanding contributions in the areas of media and sports information. Fittingly, 15 years later and now the MIAC's executive director, McKane himself is a recipient of the prestigious honor, as the MIAC's sports information directors unanimously selected him as the 2014-15 honoree.

McKane was voted the winner of the 2014-15 MIAC Mike Augustin Award at the MIAC Sports Information Directors' Council Meeting in August, and he was officially presented with the award Tuesday (Nov. 18) at the MIAC Athletic Directors' Council Meeting at Hamline University. St. Olaf Assistant Athletic Director and Sports Information Director Mike Ludwig presented McKane with a plaque to commemorate the honor and spoke about his qualifications for the award.

"There's really no one else that deserves this more after all Dan has done for sports information in the MIAC," Ludwig said during Tuesday's presentation. "His commitment and dedication to the conference have resulted in huge advancements in sports information and media relations during his time in the conference office, and the SIDs wanted to recognize his contributions with this honor."



MIAC Executive Director Dan McKane

McKane is the 13th recipient, and first from the conference office, of the Mike Augustin Award, which is presented annually to recognize outstanding contributions to MIAC athletic programs and their student-athletes in the area of media, broadcasting and sports information. The award is named in memory of the late Mike Augustin, a longtime sportswriter at the Pioneer Press and an articulate friend, follower and advocate of the MIAC.

"It is a true honor to be recognized as this year's recipient of the MIAC Mike Augustin Award," McKane said. "I am proud every day to be associated with the MIAC and to represent so many great institutions. I remember my first year in the conference office [1999], when the MIAC sports information directors recommended we create this award. I never thought that I would be considered to receive this prestigious honor. I am honored to join a long list of extremely talented and special individuals that have done so much to promote the great stories of the MIAC."

McKane was hired as the MIAC's first assistant executive director in 1999 by Executive Director Carlyle Carter, and succeeded Carter as executive director in 2005. During his first six years, he started the conference office's sports information practices and MIAC web site from scratch, and worked to make the MIAC a leader in an area that was constantly evolving with technological advances. He also worked to form strong relationships with media outlets throughout the state.

"Dan is extremely deserving of this award," said Concordia Sports Information Director Jim Cella, who nominated McKane for the honor. "He started in the MIAC office in charge of dealing with all the media and sports information directors and elevated that position to where we see it today. His attention to personal relationships and detail helped the MIAC gain more of a media presence in the Twin Cities and throughout all of Minnesota."

"In addition to his ability to gain more media coverage for the MIAC, he also started the league's web site and online presence. His foresight and recognition of the future of the internet helped the MIAC become one of the first conferences in the nation to have a detailed website for every sport. The league's website not only helped fans of the MIAC stay involved with the schools but it also helped streamline the work of the sports information directors."

After he rose to his current position, McKane was still a strong advocate for advancements in sports information. He ushered the MIAC through two new web sites, first as Sidearm Sports' first conference client in 2006, and to a PrestoSports web site in 2013 with improved stats, awards,

multimedia and scoreboard features. He helped the MIAC build a strong profile on social media and oversee sports information at MIAC Playoff and Championship events. McKane's vision has helped the MIAC become a national leader in the area of sports information, as the conference has focused on using its online platforms to tell the stories of its tremendous student-athletes.

McKane's credentials in this area have been well-recognized, as he has served as the chair of Division III Commissioners Association (D3CA) Technology Committee and spoken on many national panels about the use of technology in athletic media relations. He has also served on the Sidarm Sports Client Advisory Board, and he has appeared on TV, radio and in print to promote the MIAC.

"There is no one more deserving of this award than Dan," said Saint Mary's Sports Information Director Donny Nadeau, winner of the 2010-11 MIAC Mike Augustin Award. "He is the epitome of everything this award stands for. The MIAC and all the conference schools are fortunate to be under the leadership of Dan."

McKane has also done much to mentor the next generation of sports information directors in the MIAC and the region. He has hired two assistant executive directors since his promotion - Matt Ten Haken in 2005 and Matt Higgins in 2010 - and has several other former employees in the profession. Augsburg Associate Athletic Director Kelly Anderson Diercks, who assists with sports information in her current role, and Upper Midwest Athletic Conference Assistant Commissioner Natalie Arians both served as MIAC assistant directors under McKane. St. Catherine Sports Information Director Sara Eisenhower is a former MIAC intern, as is University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire Sports Information Director Jill (Janke) Millis and Mike Schoenborn, who served as SID at Marian College for a number of years.



Dan McKane (right) presents the 2014 MIAC Women's Cross Country championship trophy to Carleton in November 2014.



St. Olaf's Mike Ludwig presents Dan McKane with the MIAC Mike Augustin Award at the MIAC AD Council Meeting on Nov. 1.

also has served on the NCAA Convention Planning committee and the D3CA Diversity & Well-Being, Sportsmanship and Technology committees.

McKane was a men's soccer student-athlete in the MIAC at Gustavus Adolphus College and, after graduation, spent three years as a Gusties assistant coach. He holds degrees from two MIAC institutions - a Bachelor's degree in Business Management from Gustavus in 1996 and a Master's degree in Athletic Administration from the University of St. Thomas in 2008. McKane is a native of South St. Paul, Minn., and currently resides in Farmington, Minn.

"Dan is the type of person who lives what he preaches," Eisenhower said. "As a mentor, Dan has always encouraged me to take advantage of every opportunity available to me to learn and grow. He does the same in his role with the MIAC. Dan isn't afraid to take chances and try new things if there is a chance it will make this great conference even better. His determination to make the MIAC one of the best conferences in Division III hasn't gone unnoticed and is evidenced by the national success of our programs each year. I am so fortunate to have learned so much from Dan during my time at the MIAC, and I continue to appreciate the passion he puts into his job every day."

McKane's influence in the MIAC goes beyond his tremendous work in sports information and media relations. McKane has been the driving force behind the implementation of the MIAC's strategic plan, which has added big-picture focus in addition to the conference's day-to-day responsibilities. Under the direction of McKane's leadership, the conference has implemented a Student-Athlete Leadership Conference, an updated sportsmanship plan and numerous other policies. His day-to-day duties include overseeing the conference and its employees, NCAA/MIAC compliance and eligibility, fiscal management, championships, and officials.

McKane has also taken his administrative talents to the national level. He currently serves as the vice chair of the D3CA, and he will assume the association's chair position in January 2015. He has been a featured presenter and panelist at the NCAA convention, NCAA Careers in Sports Forums and at numerous colleges and universities. McKane

The conference established the Mike Augustin Award in 1999, following Augustin's death from a sudden illness in December of 1997. Augustin respected Division III institutions, student-athletes and coaches. The MIAC's [Mike Augustin Award web site](#) includes complete details and past recipients.

"I never had a chance to meet Mike Augustin, but growing up in the Twin Cities I remember reading his fantastic stories on small college athletics," McKane said. "The exposure he created for the MIAC helped introduce me to this great conference that I truly love."

| [MIAC Mike Augustin Award](#) | [Dan McKane Bio](#) |