

# Akron Beacon Journal

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## HIGH-SCHOOL

# Mike Vrabel headlines Summit County Sports Hall of Fame Class of 2023



**Michael Beaven**

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The Board of Directors of the Summit County Sports Hall of Fame announced the members of its Hall of Fame Class of 2023 on Thursday.

Summit County Sports Hall of Fame President Jeff Kurtz said nine former athletes and coaches, with strong ties to Summit County and the surrounding area, will be enshrined. Recipients of the Ed Kalail Volunteer Award and the Andy Palich Memorial Service Award also will be enshrined.

One of the inductees in 2023 will be Tennessee Titans head coach Mike Vrabel, a graduate of Walsh Jesuit High School and Ohio State University.

The 65th Anniversary Induction Ceremony and Banquet will be held Tuesday, Oct. 3, at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church, 129 South Union Street in Akron.

Tickets can be purchased online at [akronroundtable.org](http://akronroundtable.org). Adult tickets are \$55, children (12 & under) are \$25. Patron Tickets, which also includes your name in the banquet program, are \$80. For information on advertising in the banquet program or event sponsorship opportunities, please contact Mark Gerberich at 330-329-7394.

The 2023 inductees:

## Mike Vrabel of Walsh Jesuit and Ohio State University

Vrabel was a standout football player at Walsh Jesuit and Ohio State, where he was a consensus first team All-American as a senior and was named the Big Ten Defensive Lineman of the Year in 1995 and 1996. He was a third-round draft pick of the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1997 and also played for the New England Patriots and Kansas City Chiefs. Vrabel

is a three-time Super Bowl champion, was a first team All-Pro in 2007 and was named to the Patriots All-Dynasty Team and the Patriots 50th Anniversary Team. He was named the NFL Coach of the Year in 2021 with the Titans. Vrbael was selected as a member of the Ohio State All-Century Team in 2000 and was inducted into the Ohio State Athletics Hall of Fame in 2012.

## **Jim Braccio of St. Vincent-St. Mary and the University of Akron**

Braccio is a graduate of St. Vincent-St. Mary High School and the University of Akron. He was a four-year letterman in football and track and field for the Zips and a multiple recipient of the Harry "Doc" Smith Award, presented to the Zips most outstanding athlete. He was the co-captain of the UA football team and a member of Akron's 1965-1966 Ohio Conference track and field championship team. He was inducted into the University Akron's Varsity "A" Club, the St. Vincent-St. Mary Athletics and the Greater Akron Softball Halls of Fame.

## **Andy Daniels of Buchtel and Ohio University**

Daniels is a graduate of Buchtel High School and Ohio University. He earned All-America honors in 1978 by virtue of his NCAA National Wrestling Tournament Championship at 118 pounds. He was a three-time Mid-American Conference champion at 118 pounds for the Bobcats (1976, '77, '78) and helped Ohio to MAC team championships in 1975 and 1976. Daniels was named the MAC Championship Meet's "Outstanding Wrestler" in 1977 and 1978 and was a 1983 inductee into the Kermit Blosser Ohio University Athletics Hall of Fame.

## **Jessica Jensen (Starcher) of Barberton and University of Northern Kentucky**

Jensen graduated from Barberton High School in 1997 and the University of Northern Kentucky in 2001). She was a four-year letterwinner in basketball for the Norse and also lettered in soccer. Jensen was a starter on NKU's 1999-2000 NCAA Division II National Championship women's basketball team that posted a 32-2 record and was a member of NKU's 2001 NCAA Division II Final Four women's soccer team. She is a member of the Barberton Sports Hall of Fame and the Northern Kentucky University Athletics Hall of Fame.

## **Mike Morrow of Stow-Munroe Falls and Kent State University**

Morrow is a graduate of Stow-Munroe Falls High School and Kent State University. He was a four-year letterman for the Golden Flashes men's golf team. He earned Mid-American Conference Medalist honors in 1973 and became Kent State's first All-America golfer. Morrow was named Kent State's first women's golf coach in 1998 and guided the Flashes to 14 consecutive MAC team championships and four NCAA championship tournament appearances. He was named MAC Coach of the Year 10 times, NCAA Regional Coach of the Year twice and the 2001 National Coach of the Year by Golf Week Magazine. He is a member of the KSU Varsity "K" Athletics Hall of Fame and the Stow-Munroe Falls High School and the Women's Golf Coaches Association Halls of Fame.

## **Sean Robbins of Akron East and Ashland University**

Robbins graduated from Akron East High School and Ashland University. He was a 12-time All-America selection at Ashland and a five-time NCAA champion as a track and field athlete. Robbins broke Jesse Owens' Ohio collegiate record and set the NCAA Championship meet record in 1995 in the long jump with a leap of 27 feet, 5 inches in 1996. He competed in the US Olympic Festival in 1994 and 1995 and is a member of the Akron East and Ashland University Athletic Halls of Fame, as well as the USTF and the Ohio Track and Field and Cross County Coaches Association Halls of Fame.

## **Stan Stammen of Woodridge**

Stammen founded the cross country, track and field and wrestling programs at Woodridge High School and served as the boys and girls cross country coach for 32 years. He guided the Bulldogs girls cross country team to an OHSAA state championship in 1995 and runner-up finishes in 1993 and 1996. His teams won a combined 17 league championships, seven district titles, three regional championships and posted a record of 307-101. During his 32 years, 88 Woodridge runners qualified for the state meet, with 31 earning All-Ohio honors. He helped six individual Woodridge runners to a state title in cross country and one in track and field. He is a member of the Woodridge Athletics, the Ohio Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches and the Ohio Wrestling Coaches Association Halls of Fame.

## **Mark Steinkerchner of Copley and the University of Akron**

Steinkerchner is a graduate of Copley High School and the University of Akron. He had an outstanding career as a football official at the high school college and professional levels. Steinkerchner served as an National Football League official for 28 years and worked in 13 divisional playoff games, six wild card games, four conference championship contests, three Pro Bowls and two Super Bowls. He worked OHSAA games for 14 years, spent five years at the NCAA Division III level and five years officiating football in the Mid-American Conference. He is a member of the Copley High School Sports Hall of Fame, Phi Delta Theta Sports HOF and is a lifetime member of the Summit-Portage Football Officials Association.

## **Mary Varga Stupczy of the University of Akron**

Stupczy was a five-time All-American in track and field at the University of Akron, where she excelled in the high jump, javelin, pentathlon and heptathlon. She became the first female athlete from Akron to qualify for the NCAA Championships in three events. She was named Akron's Female Athlete of the Year in 2001. During her Zips career, she established school and Mid-American Conference records in the high jump and pentathlon and was the MAC Indoor Championship Meet's Most Outstanding Performer in 2001. She was named one of the University of Akron's All-Time Top-40 Female Athletes as part of the University's Title IX 40th Anniversary celebration.

## **Glenda Buchanan and Reverend Ronald Fowler selected for awards**

Glenda Buchanan was selected to receive the Ed Kalail Volunteer Award for her efforts around Akron.

Buchanan has been a member of the SCSHOF Board of Directors since 2016 and is now serving her second term as Vice President. She has a long history of volunteerism in the Akron area, including with the Bridgestone Invitational and the Kaulig Companies Championships at Firestone Country Club (1995-2000 and 2018-present). She has also served as a volunteer for the Akron Bar Association's Grievance Committee, as a Guardian Advocate and Chair of the Court Observers' Committee, as a member of the Board of Trustees for the IBH Addiction Recovery Program and Chair of the organization's 50th Anniversary Gala and Fund Development committee and as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Northern Ohio Golf Charities.

Reverend Ronald Fowler was selected to receive the Andy Palich Service Award for his work around Akron.

Reverend Fowler has led Akron's Arlington Church of God for nearly 40 years and has also been the President of the Akron City Schools Board of Education and as co-chair of Akron's "This City Reads" program and as a Board member of the Summit Education Initiative. He also served served as the head of the University of Akron's Student Discipline and Law Enforcement Policy Review Commission and for many years as the Team Chaplain for the University of Akron and Kent State University athletics teams.

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