

Jay was an IAHPERD member for 29 years and retired three years ago to move onto a farm near his home town which is 50 miles south of Kansas City. Jay stated, "I am living the life of my dreams." Prior to retirement in 2013, his education and work experience included earning his bachelor's degree from Missouri Southern College, a master's degree from Pittsburg State University, and his doctorate degree from the University of Arkansas. He taught and coached at Butler, Mo., was the athletic director/HPER professor at Oakland City College in Oakland, Ind. and in 1984 became a faculty member at Briar Cliff College in Sioux City, IA serving as a professor, chairperson for the HPER department, and athletic director during his 19 years.

His professional contributions and service to our association have included serving as the Treasurer and chair of the budget committee for 19 years, interim Executive Director for 2 years, was a National and District delegate numerous times, and presented multiple times at conventions. I would like to share some of the supporting comments made about Jay and his professional contributions and service to our association during his 29 years.

*I cannot believe Jay has not already been given this award. How could we have overlooked such an important part of the history of this association without recognizing this person? Maybe because he was always very silent and chose to remain in the background? When we needed guidance, Jay would come to us with the true facts of the matter. He reminded me a lot of HO Maxey. (HO Maxey was a physical educator for over 30 years, IAHPERD President, and long-time leader in ISEA who believed in giving back to the communities in which we serve)*

*He was the glue that kept the organization moving forward with his ever on the spot knowledge if we could actually afford what we hoped to do at that time. Jay is a quiet leader who thought things out and then spoke with authority. We listened when Jay spoke.*

*Jay always was a leader in getting his students to the conventions. You could always count on his students being leaders. I am sure they took good mental notes and said to themselves this is how a leader leads.*

*Jay Gunnels really took care of IAHPERD and the people within the organization. There were many meetings when I was fortunate to sit next to Jay. I enjoyed his sense of humor and the fact you had to work very hard and justify a budget line item increase - he had a tight hold on funding. :) He always put the best interest of IAHPERD first and was always a pleasure to see a couple of times a year at events. Jay is very deserving of this honor and I am so happy we are recognizing him this evening.*

Jay shared the following message with me about this award...

*I am very happy to be remembered by my IAHPERD friends, I am honored that you want to give me an award, and I am humbled to be listed with these other great IAHPERD leaders. Thank you and IAHPERD for the award, I am truly blessed to have such friends.*

Thank you Jay for your outstanding professional contributions. Please join me in congratulating our 2016 Distinguished Service Award winner, Dr Jay Gunnels.