Dr. Keith Marek Honored With Noel Olson Volunteer of the Year Award

Burnsville, Minn. -- Dr. Keith Marek of Bemidji, Minn. will be honored with the NSIC’s Noel Olson Volunteer of the Year Award during the 16th annual NSIC Hall of Fame Banquet on Wednesday, July 15 at the Best Western Premier in Burnsville, Minn.

The Noel Olson Volunteer of the Year Award recognizes the singular commitment of former NSIC coach and Athletic Administrator, Noel Olson, to the advancement of NSIC visibility, credibility, and excellence throughout the nation during his tenure in the league. The award is intended to honor individuals who, as volunteers, have made significant contributions to the NSIC as a whole. On a periodic basis, one or more individuals receive the award in appreciation of efforts to support the NSIC activities and/or athletic programs within any NSIC member institution(s) or the NSIC conference office. The award recipients are nominated by each of the NSIC’s 16 institutions and selected by the NSIC Hall of Fame Committee.

To attend the NSIC Hall of Fame Banquet go to www.NorthernSun.org/SummerKickoff and fill out the online form. The price to attend the banquet (including meal) is $30.00 - register by June 26 as space is limited.

2015 Noel Olson Award Recipients

Dr. Keith Marek - Bemidji State University

Over the course of the past decade, Dr. Keith Marek has become a driving force in the game day experience at Bemidji State University. Whether you know him or not, his voice has become synonymous with Beaver Athletics.

“Get on your feet Beaver Nation. It’s time for the starters for your Bemidji State Universityyyyyy Beeeeeaversssss…”

Dr. Marek’s integration into athletics at BSU just happened. A professor of chemistry at BSU, Dr. Marek has been interested in athletics and been a member of Beaver Pride, BSU’s athletic booster group, since stepping on campus, but in 2004-05 that relationship became a bit more extensive. Marek heard BSU was struggling to gain an identity and add excitement into its volleyball games and was looking for a new public address announcer. A former deejay, Marek jumped at the opportunity. The rest is history. His volleyball announcing soon became basketball and volleyball announcing, which later became basketball, volleyball and soccer announcing and he’s occasionally filled in at women’s hockey and football.

Over the last 10-plus seasons, not only has Marek lent his voice to starting line ups and announcements for more than 500 home games, he also manages BSU’s warm up and in-game music selection, coordinates timeouts with pep bands, serves as an in-game host for halftime and in-game promotions and is a regular singer of the National Anthem, whether scheduled or as a last-second replacement. Needless to say, Marek is a one-stop shop for event management.

Marek is someone that BSU coaches request to be at special games, such as senior day or an NSIC home playoff game, to enhance the experience of parents, players and fans or ramp up the excitement.

As an employee of the University, Marek may be on the payroll, but his compensation revolves around his “day job.” His announcing duties have always remained solely a volunteer.

Dr. Keith Marek is an unsung hero in the Bemidji State University Department of Athletics. His multi-oriented volunteer services are so valuable to the event management staff, it often takes three or four people to carry out the duties he performs on a night in, night out basis.

PAST NOEL OLSON AWARD WINNERS

2008-09 Roger Haug - U-Mary, Rocco Ierino - UMD & Dr. Harry Jasinski - NSU
2009-10 Dale Haagenson - UMD
2010-11 Paul and Barb Halstenson - Augie & Ken Mukomela - SMSU
2011-12 Neal Kalberer - U-Mary
2012-13 Kevin and Karla Anundson - SMSU
2013-14 David and Carol Drown - SMSU & Brice Wilkinson - WSU
2014-15 Dr. Keith Marek - BSU

The NSIC is a 16-team, 17-sport, NCAA Division II Conference with teams located in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota.