

Watchung Hills Regional High School Hall of Fame



Tina Cecala

Physical Education Teacher, Girls' Head Swim Coach

Tina Cecala served for 33 years in the Physical Education Department and is celebrated for her outstanding record as the Girls' Head Swimming Coach, a position she held for 13 years. Her record was so outstanding, in fact, that the Star Ledger, in celebration of the past millennium, named her "One of the Top Six Coaches" in the history of high school girls' swimming for a record of 140-21-2.

As a result, Tina was inducted into the New Jersey Interscholastic Coaches Association's Hall of Fame in 1991, received the National Federation of Interscholastic Coaches Association Distinguished Service Award in 1998, and was nominated for the National Interscholastic Coaches Association Distinguished Service Award in 1998. Previously, she was named Coach of the Year by the Newark Star Ledger (1987-1988), the Mid-State Conference (1988-1989) and the Courier News (1988-1989). Moreover, she was selected by the Star Ledger as one of the top six coaches in New Jersey Girl's High School swimming (1998), and her Girls Swim team was one of the top six teams in the state.

Among honors achieved by her swim teams: seven Mid-State Conference championships; eight Somerset County championships; four NJSIAA Central Jersey Group III State Sectional Championships; five NJSIAA State Championships, B Division; three Pirate Invitational Championships, National Interscholastic Swimming Coaches Association of America Power Point Award. The 1989 team set the state record in the 200-yard medley, and Tina's swim team was the first sport in Hills' history to win three consecutive state titles.

Tina also served as Girls' Track Coach for eight years (1980-1988), recording 30 victories; the team's 1985 record (six wins) stood until 1993. Amid all of her coaching, as well as "classroom teaching" responsibilities, Tina also was involved in such activities as physical education curriculum revision, staff development, fitness training and curriculum, and the independent study program. Outside of school, Tina has also been active in community swimming programs.