



American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) to be Honored at Positive Coaching Alliance's National Youth Sports Awards sponsored by Deloitte

March 10, 2009, Stanford, CA – For its outstanding work in creating a positive environment for youth athletes, the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) has earned Positive Coaching Alliance's National Leadership Award.

The award recognizes AYSO's national service to athletes of high school age and younger by using Positive Coaching Alliance principles to teach life lessons through sports. AYSO will be formally honored by Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA) at the Eighth Annual National Youth Sports Awards Ceremony at Stanford University's Maples Pavilion on Friday, April 24.

“Winning our National Leadership Award is an amazing achievement because of the amount of work it takes to establish and maintain a positive culture in the face of so many negative influences,” said Jim Thompson, PCA's founder and executive director. “While we honor AYSO, the real winners are the youth athletes and families who benefit from AYSO's positive sports culture.”

Keying AYSO's selection:

- Outstanding service to the 600,000 children, ages 4 to 19, who play soccer in AYSO's almost 1000 community leagues (called Regions) throughout the U.S.
- A 44-year history of commitment to its five core philosophies of: Everyone Plays™; Balanced Teams; Open registration; Positive Coaching; and Good Sportsmanship.
- Child-centric programs, such as the Safe Haven™, an organization-wide child and volunteer safety initiative, and Kids Zone™, a child-friendly sideline initiative that helps spectators remember they're cheerleaders and not critics.

In addition to presentations from award recipients – selected by a panel of experts in organizational culture – highlights of the ceremony include presentation of PCA's Ronald L. Jensen Award for Lifetime Achievement to Tara VanDerveer, Stanford University Head Women's Basketball Coach, who has won two NCAA Championships and an Olympic Gold Medal as coach of the 1996 U.S. Women's National Team.



Joining VanDerveer at the event are many of her current and former players, including two-time Olympic Gold Medalist, former WNBA star and PCA National Advisory Board Member Ruthie Bolton. Also featured: Olympic Gold Medal Swimmer and PCA National Advisory Board Member Summer Sanders.

More information and online ticket sales for PCA's National Youth Sports Awards sponsored by Deloitte are available at www.positivecoach.org/2009-awards.aspx.

About Positive Coaching Alliance

Founded as a non-profit within the Stanford University Athletic Department in 1998, Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA) has the mission of "transforming youth sports so sports can transform youth." To that end, PCA has conducted roughly 6,000 live group workshops nationwide for more than 300,000 youth and high school sports leaders, coaches, parents and athletes. Workshop attendees have helped create a positive, character-building youth sports environment for more than 3 million youth athletes.

PCA's partnership network includes more than 1,100 youth sports organizations, cities and schools. In 2009, PCA will conduct roughly 1,300 live, group workshops across the U.S., while assisting thousands of other individuals via online workshops at www.PositiveCoach.org.

PCA workshops train coaches to be Double-Goal Coaches[®], whose first goal is winning and whose second, more-important goal is teaching life lessons through sports. PCA sports parent workshops cultivate "Second-Goal Parents," who focus on life lessons through sports. PCA student-athlete workshops produce "Triple-Impact Competitors," who work to improve themselves, their teammates, and their sport as a whole. PCA has the support of elite coaches and athletes on a National Advisory Board (<http://www.positivecoach.org/advisoryboard.aspx>), including National Spokesperson, Los Angeles Lakers Coach Phil Jackson.

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