



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, July 6, 2022

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Legendary Holly High School wrestling coach inducted into Michigan High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame

Don Pluta taught, coached for four decades, serving as role model for students, teachers, community

HOLLY, Mich. – Even in retirement, **Don Pluta** keeps racking up accolades and recognition for his impact on generations of Holly High School athletes and students. His latest honor: induction into the Michigan High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame (MHSCA).

On Sept. 25, the longtime Holly High School wrestling coach will join 13 other coaches from across Michigan to be recognized as 2022 Hall of Fame inductees for their achievements on the field, in the arena and in the classroom. The formal induction ceremony will take place at Central Michigan University.

“Throughout his life and career, Don inspired everyone around him to strive for excellence and served as a mentor to countless students and athletes,” said **Casey Lombard**, Holly High School athletic director. “Coach Pluta continues to serve as an ambassador and role model for our Broncho students, teachers, staff, administrators and community. His induction into the Michigan High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame is just the latest in a long line of well-deserved awards and accolades, and all of us at Holly High are proud of his achievement and grateful for his continued positive impact on our community.”

The MHSCA Hall of Fame recognizes outstanding individuals who have coached or directed a secondary school athletics (sixth- to 12th-grade) program for 20 years or more and actively coached in Michigan for a minimum of 10 years. About 800 people have been inducted into the MHSCA Hall of Fame, which is located in a hallway of the Student Activities Center on the campus of Central Michigan University.

Pluta’s love for wrestling began as a student at Holly High School, when at 5 feet, 6 inches tall he was persuaded to try wrestling over basketball. He graduated from Holly High School in

1973. After graduating from Western Michigan University, Pluta returned to Holly High School to teach and coach wrestling. During his four-decade career as a wrestling coach, Pluta led the Broncho wrestling team to 660 wins, eight league titles and 12 district championships. Under his guidance, the team qualified for the State Team Tournament three times and earned four Academic All-State Awards, with nine wrestlers winning state championships and 51 becoming state-placers. Pluta retired as coach in 2019. He dedicated most of his 41-year teaching career to the district's alternative education program, which he helped launch, and taught high school language arts and physical education.

In addition to the MHSCA Hall of Fame, Pluta was inducted in April into the Michigan Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in Stillwater, Oklahoma. In November 2019, he was inducted into the Michigan Wrestling Association Hall of Fame. Pluta has also been recognized numerous times by his peers, including nine times as Michigan Wrestling Association Regional Coach of the Year, three times as Flint Metro League Coach of the Year and as Oakland County Coach of the Year. Pluta was inducted into the Holly High School Hall of Fame in 2008.

"All of us in the Broncho community are so proud of Don, a true legend who inspired students in the classroom and on the mat to be the best at whatever they did," said **Scott Roper**, Holly Area Schools superintendent. "Coach Pluta exemplifies Broncho Pride and the crucial role athletics plays in helping student athletes learn important life skills that help prepare them for success."

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Cutline: Don Pluta, former Holly High School wrestling coach and Michigan High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame inductee.