

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Sara Flanigan

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Sports Stories-IHSA Oral History project

Interview # SIH-A-L-2017-008

Sara Flanigan, a high school official and coach for competitive cheer and dance, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Sports Stories-IHSA* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Feb. 13, 2017 Location: Wauconda High School, Wauconda, IL

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Philip Pogue, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:27 / 1.45 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on May 17, 2017.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Interview being
processed

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Abstract

Sara Flanigan, *Sports Stories-IHSA*, SIH-A-L-2017-008

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Sara Flanigan was born in Woodstock, Illinois in June, 1975 and grew up in Crystal Lake, Illinois. She graduated from Crystal Lake Central High School in 1993. While at Central, Sara was on the cheer squads in both junior high and high school. Sara attended college at Northern Illinois University, majoring in teacher education (math), graduating in 1998. Upon graduation, she taught math at Hononegah High School in Rockton, Illinois (1998-2000), Mundelein High School (2000-2005), Lake Forest High School (2005-2006), and Wauconda High School (2006-present). Sara also earned a Masters degree in curriculum instruction in 2000 and an MS degree in educational leadership in 2005. These degrees led to positions as assistant director of activities and community development (2004-2005), Assistant Athletic Director (2005-2006), and Activities Director (2015-present).

Sara also coached competitive cheer as well as dance. She also became an official in those sports, judging at state, national and international meets. Sara has logged twenty-five years of experience with cheer and dance. In addition, she serves on the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) Sports Medicine /Sports Safety Advisory Committee (SMAC) which provides safety suggestions to the IHSA Board of Directors. She also has served on the Cheer/Dance IHSA advisory committee which reviews these two sports annually, and is the co-founded and current President of the Illinois Spirit Officials Association, which provides professional training for officials in dance and cheer. She also helped develop curriculum for use in youth programs for these sports, and has been selected as the Cheer Official of the Year.

This interview explores the growth of competitive cheer and dance as IHSA sports. Flanigan discusses how the IHSA divided the school teams into three state divisions (1A, 2A, and 3A), how seasons and practices are conducted, what judges look for in scoring the teams, what routines are used during meets, and how the squads are selected. She talks about her duties as a coach and official in cheer/dance, and the licensing, recruiting, and professional training needed for these sports.

Subject Headings/Key Words: cheer leading for high school sports; dance as a competition in high school; cheer and dance as IHSA sports; scoring rubrics for cheer and dance competitions; competitive dance squad selection, practice/season schedules, regular season meets and state finals, and scoring rubrics; safety considerations for cheer and dance; officiating football as a female

The Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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