

College Students' Win State Soccer Recognition

Megan Kiernan and Michael Ertel Named Coach and Young Referee of the Year

PHOTOS AVAILABLE

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Corning, NY. November 16, 2009. Megan Kiernan of Williamsville, and Michael Ertel of Tonawanda, were individually recognized on November 14, 2009 for their contributions to the game of soccer in western New York. Megan was recognized as the Boy Competitive Coach of the Year for her tireless work with an inner city soccer club, the Buffalo Soccer Club; Michael received the Young Referee of the Year for his expertise in officiating at both the state and regional level.

Kiernan, a student at Buffalo State has chosen to stay involved with soccer by coaching with the Buffalo Soccer Club. The club decided to try to field its first "travel" team this summer and Megan undertook the challenge. When the club submitted its first roster, they did not have enough players. The club pulls members from a community not familiar with soccer and Kiernan worked hard to find players and more importantly educate the families about what playing on a travel team would bring. In the end a co-ed team was formed. They did well for their first year, winning one game against far more seasoned teams. Of greatest importance though was introducing an entirely new life experience for these kids and their families which will live as they were members of the first competitive team from the club.

Michael Ertel, a physical education student at Niagara County Community College, was honored for his expertise as a young referee. Ertel began officiating as a young teen and now has progressed to hold a grade 7 USSF Referee card. He has been singled out in both state and regional competition for his maturity, keen insight on the game, and ability to manage play. His awards include previous recognition from the Buffalo and Western New York Soccer league as Male Youth referee of the year in 2007, Northtown Soccer Club's male referee of year in 2006, and Rookie referee of year in 2003. He has been recognized by both Kiwanis and Rotary with the Student Recognition Award for Excellence in Physical Education in 2009.

New York State West Youth Soccer Association is the largest non-profit organization organizing both recreational and competitive (travel) soccer in western New York. NYSWYSA has over 70,000 registered players and adult volunteers. NYSWYSA is a member of US Youth Soccer Association and the US Soccer Federation.