

Officials Appreciation Week Profile:

Alveno Smith

There are many different pathways which can lead one to becoming an official.

Alveno Smith's entry is a perfect example of how there are many ways to get involved.

"Several years back, myself and some co-workers would get together and play pickup basketball during the week," he said. "After we stopped playing, due to age, John Macey got into officiating. From time to time, I would see John and he would urge me to get into officiating and told me that I would 'love it', but at the time I was limited, as I worked during the time that games were played. Once I changed shifts and started working days, Mr. Macey provided me the contact information of Mr. Paul Armstrong, the Cadet Supervisor. I reached out to Mr. Armstrong, took the required training and thus began my basketball officiating advocacy."

That was over 15 years ago. Alveno has since established himself as an in-demand ref working out of the IAABO Board 34 (Camden) Chapter. He was among those honored with an Official of the Year award for basketball last September by the New Jersey Scholastic Officials Association.

Getting to know NJSIAA sports official Alveno Smith:

What do you enjoy most about being an official?

"Being near the game and the camaraderie with the other officials."

Do you have a favorite memory from officiating an event?

"I recently officiated the state Group 4 girls final."

What's the best part about any given day of officiating?

"Getting together with other officials and sharing game situations and odd plays, then doing the game at hand."

Do you have any memories from your first game as an official?

"During my first scrimmage, the senior official told me that she would toss and that I would follow the ball once tapped. She tossed the ball. It was tapped and ping ponged from one player to another so fast that I momentarily froze. Once I overcame the shock, we both followed the ball and both became the lead. I realized at that moment, officiating basketball was not done at the same speed of playing basketball."



What's the biggest misconception about the job of being an official?

“That we have seen everything that can happen on a basketball court. No matter what you have seen, there is always a play that will make you scratch your head and crack open your rule book to get clarification.”

What would you say to anyone thinking about becoming an official?

“Officiating can be fun. You may think that you know the rules, but once you really learn the rules, you will understand that what you know is a bit different than what the rule book says. Once you get an understanding of the rules, it will help you become a better official, so stay in your rule book.”

***Think you might be interested in becoming a high school sports official?
Check out this link to learn more: <https://www.njsiaa.org/officials/become-official>***