



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Mark Grisanti

## **Senator Grisanti Recognizes National Women And Girls In Sport Day**

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National Women and Girls in Sport Day, which marks the importance of sports participation in the lives of girls and women.

This year's celebration highlighted the role that athletics can play in young girls' development and success by acknowledging the past accomplishments of female athletes, recognizing current sports achievements, pointing out the many positives of participating in sports and highlighting the continued struggle for equality and access for women in sports.

"Studies have shown that participation in sports can have a positive influence on the intellectual, physical and psychological health of young girls," said Senator Grisanti. "According to the National Federation of State High School Associations, the majority of female athletes earn higher grades in class and have a better chance of earning entrance to college."

"Blazing the Trail, Passing the Torch" is this year's theme for National Women and Girls in Sport Day, with various community-based events, award ceremonies and special activities being held to honor the achievements of female athletes and encourage all women and girls to consider participating in sports.

Among the organizations that encourage female athletes to strive to achieve their goals is the WNY Flash, a professional women's soccer team that plays in the National Women's Soccer League. In addition to the team's outstanding play on the field, the commitment to mentoring a new generation of female athletes who are learning how to also succeed off of the field is one of the driving forces behind the team's existence.

"National Women and Girls in Sport Day not only celebrates the accomplishments women have made in sport, but the increasing possibilities of where sport can take us and how we can make a difference through it," said Alex Sahlen, who serves as president of Sahlen Sports Park in the Town of Elma and is also the managing

partner and a player on the WNY Flash. "In addition to being able to make sport my profession, I have been able to teach and share the positive influence of sport through numerous youth training programs at Sahlen Sports Park."

The National Women Sports Foundation in conjunction with the Wilson Foundation appreciates the value of female athletics and this year offered the "Go Girl Go Grant" aimed specifically at non-profits who administer programs for girls ages 5 to 13 in the City of Buffalo. The purpose of the grant was to support sports and physical activity programs seeking to add new or expand existing program participation opportunities for an under-served population of girls, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged and girls from populations with high instances of health-risk behaviors.

"It has been proven that the bonds and friendships established between girls and women through athletics helps to break down social barriers while helping to foster important life skills such as cooperation and communication," said Grisanti. "I am honored to be able to promote and recognize people like Alex Sahlen because they have made the commitment to teaching and sharing the positive influence of sport through training programs. Those efforts make a positive impact on the lives of many young girls and help show how sport can allow women and girls to make a difference."

**To view the Senator's Comments please click the video below:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0HeC-dIPv4>