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**AMERICANS SAY WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING**

New Survey Says 94 Percent Prefer Good Sportsmanship over Winning even though Sportsmanship is on Decline

GLENVIEW, Ill. (July 28, 2009) – Are Americans becoming a nation of kinder, gentler people? A new survey reveals that when it comes to sportsmanship, 94 percent of Americans would rather see their child lose the “big game” but display great sportsmanship, rather than come out on top.

That’s good news for the state of sportsmanship in the United States. Unfortunately, for the fourth year in a row, the vast majority of Americans believe that sportsmanship is worse now than when they were growing up. According to the national survey fielded for the Awards and Recognition Association (ARA) by TNS, more than 85 percent of Americans from ages 20 to 80+ still think sportsmanship is worse now than in previous years. This is the fourth year in a row for the benchmark survey.

“What Americans think and what they are displaying or seeing are two vastly different things,” said Glenn Beckworth, president of the ARA. “We feel it’s more critical than ever to continually recognize good sportsmanship at all levels, but especially at the onset, when children start playing sports.”

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## **AMERICANS SAY WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING** –ADD ONE

The annual sportsmanship survey also polled Americans to find out if the economy is affecting kid's organized sports in any way. Almost half of parents with kids in sports said the lack of discretionary funds was affecting the number of sports their children will be able to play.

There was a bright spot, however, for the 30 and younger respondents, as 33 percent felt sportsmanship is better now than in the late 1970s.

“The Awards & Recognition Association has been polling Americans for the past four years to gauge sentiments on sportsmanship and, most importantly, to see what we can do about it,” said Beckworth. “We feel it's vital to get a pulse check on American's sportsmanship views so we can tailor our educational and supportive efforts where they're most needed. We're zeroing in to do our part to support sportsmanship from Pee Wee to the big leagues and are encouraged to hear survey results highlighting the desire for sportsmanship over winning.”

### **ARA National Sportsmanship Award**

To help make inroads into positive sportsmanship; encourage good behavior among athletes, coaches and parents; and teach sportsmanship at all levels, ARA has recruited some of the most renowned coaching legends and sports experts for a blue-ribbon panel that rewards college football sportsmanship standouts with its national sportsmanship award. The ARA Sportsmanship Award is the only national award that focuses on sportsmanship. It stands out as unique among the millions of sports trophies presented to athletes annually.

“The ARA has assembled an unprecedented committee of award-winning coaches to help shine a bright light on sportsmanship and hopefully elicit some positive change,” said award- and bowl-winning retired Brigham Young Coach LaVell Edwards, who has chaired the panel since its inception. “Our work includes selecting the winner of the annual, one-of-its-kind ‘ARA Sportsmanship Award.’”

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## **AMERICANS SAY WINNING ISN'T EVERYTHING –ADD TWO**

The solid-bronze, 125-pound award, designed by sculptor Edward Jonas, is presented to a Bowl Division college football player who exemplifies sportsmanship both on and off the field.

Past ARA Sportsmanship Award winners include: Carolina Panthers running back DeAngelo Williams in 2005; Cincinnati Bengals running back Brian Leonard in 2006; Washington State quarterback Alex Brink in 2007; and Chicago Bears free agent and recent Northwestern Wildcat graduate, Eric Peterman in 2008.

### **About the ARA Sportsmanship Award**

The Awards and Recognition Association recognizes good sportsmanship nationally in collegiate football players with its ARA Sportsmanship Award, presented annually to the student who personifies sportsmanship. ARA's selection committee, chaired by Edwards, includes former collegiate and professional coaches and others, including Dick MacPherson, Christine Brennan, Rod Commons, Lee Corso, Vince Dooley, Spike Dykes, Steve Hatchell, Don James, Bernie Kish, Lisa Malin, Don Nehlen, Tubby Raymond, Gene Stallings and Grant Teaff. For more information, visit [www.arasportsmanshipaward.com](http://www.arasportsmanshipaward.com)

### **About ARA**

ARA is comprised of 3,000 retailers and suppliers within the awards and recognition industry. Since 1964, ARA has been enhancing and supporting the awards industry by providing education programs, information, trade shows and networking opportunities. Retail awards and trophy stores that are ARA members proudly display the ARA logo. Look for it the next time you need an award. For more information about ARA, visit [www.ara.org](http://www.ara.org) or contact ARA headquarters by phone at 800/344-2148 or via fax at 888/374-7257.