

2010 Joseph G. Rogers Award

For Long and Exceptional Leadership and Accomplishments in YMCA Competitive Swimming Benefiting all Swimmers, Coaches, Parents and Volunteers



The 2010 honored recipient is **John Mendell**. John, his wife, Linda and their four children: John, Tracy, Brian and Scott, lived for many years in Mountain Lakes, N.J before moving to Vero Beach, Florida. Prior to retirement in 2008, John commuted to downtown N.Y.C. where he worked for a major financial services firm.

The Mendell family's passion began when their son John (soon to be followed by all of their other children) began swimming lessons at the Lakeland Hills Family YMCA (LHY) in Mountain Lakes, New Jersey and competing for the town summer swim team and eventually the LHY Swim team. In 1981, John became certified as both a YMCA and USA-S Swimming Official. Over the next 23 years, John served as President of the LHY Swim Team Parents' Organization, President of the Mt. Lakes Swim Association, Chairman of the Lakeland Swim Conference of North Jersey, a board member and trustee of LHY, Chairman of the NJ YMCA Officials' Committee, a member of the NJ USA-S Officials Committee, and an active official and trainer at all levels of swimming for YMCA and USA Swimming.

In the late 1990's, with a strong and active support group, the N.J. YMCA Officials Committee was able to establish broad based relationships with the NJ USA-S Officials Committee. Their work formed a foundation for future cooperative growth between both organizations on a local and eventually national level.

John became a YMCA National Official in 1988 and joined the YMCA National Officials Committee in 1999 working the SC and LC national meets as a judge, starter and referee. From 2001-2003, John was a member of the YMCA National Advisory Committee and in 2004 was named as the Assistant Meet Director for the YMCA Long Course National Championship. In 2005, he was appointed as the Meet Director for YMCA Short Course National Championship. From 2005-2007, he represented the YMCA on the USA-S Rules Committee and for a portion of that time was also member of the USA-S Officials Committee. His efforts to improve the quality of all swimming resulted in John being only the second YMCA Official to be awarded the Maxwell Excellence Award by USA-S for contributions to the sport of swimming. In 2009, John represented the YMCA on the OKI (Our Kids Initiative) Committee.

During John's period as Meet Director for SC Nationals, he broadened volunteer responsibility, actively sought committee members with varying skills, developed a great team and vigilantly worked to make the organization better for all participants. At the same time, working under National Committee Chair, Jim Ryan, John worked to improve the cooperation between YMCA Swimming and USA-S. This culminated in YMCA Swimming adopting USA-S technical rules, which allowed all YMCA swimmers to compete under one set of rules.

John's dedication and commitment to improving swimming for all athletes, coaches, parents and volunteers coupled with his strive for excellence and personal integrity has resulted in greatly enhancing not only YMCA swimming but the sport of competitive swimming.