

JOHN SIKORA

Mr. John Sikora has dedicated his career toward caring and improving the lifestyles of persons with physical disabilities and educating the public about them.

John graduated from Elizabeth-Forward High School in 1971. Two weeks before graduation he was involved in a motor vehicle accident that left him with a spinal cord injury and paralyzed from the waist down. Following a year of hospitalization at the Harmarville Rehabilitation Center, John enrolled at the University of Pittsburgh where he earned a Bachelors degree in Psychology in 1976. While at Pitt, John became a member of Sigma Chi fraternity and earned a varsity letter while working as a manager for the Pitt men's basketball team. He also dedicated time to helping the Pitt women' basketball team and the Pitt track and field team as the PA announcer for games and meets.

John is currently the executive director of **HOPE Network**, a non-profit business incorporated in 1997. HOPE Network's mission is to promote community integration of individuals with physical disabilities through a variety of programs, services, and activities that support the return to a healthy and productive lifestyle. It is designed to meet the needs of the disabled children and adults, as well as their families and friends, through the provision of sports, fitness, recreation, and education programs. Prior to HOPE Network, John joined the staff at Harmarville Rehabilitation Center in 1976 as a social worker. In 1981, he moved into a management position as director of the Spinal Cord Program, a post he held until 1993 when he left to create the Healthsports programs under the Harmarville Foundation.

John has been committed to the community in many ways. He has served as a Founder and member of the board of directors for the Pittsburgh Steelwheelers, Inc., as director of the popular Harmarville Hoops Classic 3-on-3 basketball tournament, as commissioner of the Keystone Conference of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association (NWBA), and as a board member on the Nick Buoniconti Fund for the Miami Project - Western PA chapter. He holds memberships in the Paralyzed Veterans of America, National Spinal Cord Injury Association, Wheelchair Sports/USA, and the National Wheelchair Basketball Association. He also serves on the advisory board for the School of Physical Therapy at Duquesne University and was an assistant basketball coach for the men's varsity team at Freeport High School from 1993 - 2001 and again in 2009 - 2010.

John's list of recognitions for his life achievements include inductions into the City of Pittsburgh - Sports by Ability Hall of Fame, Elizabeth-Forward High School Alumni and Friends Hall of Fame, as well as receiving the United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) Community Hero Award and being recognized as a University of Pittsburgh Varsity Letter Club 2002 Awardee of Distinction. He has also been inducted into the Allegheny-Valley Sports Hall of Fame, the Armstrong County Sports Hall of Fame, and the Pittsburgh Basketball Club Hall of Fame.

John has made hundreds of presentations on such topics as trauma awareness/prevention, wheelchair sports, and disability awareness at schools, hospitals, church, and community groups.

He has made numerous radio and television appearances including three episodes of *Mr. Rogers Neighborhood*.

John is an accomplished wheelchair athlete. He was a member of four (and co-captain of three) USA Wheelchair Basketball teams that played in the World Championships and Pan-Am Games in England, Venezuela, and Brazil in the 1990's. He has also won numerous awards in track and field both locally and nationally highlighted by several years as a national champion in the pentathlon event. One of his most rewarding accomplishments were realized through his position as assistant coach for the USA Women's National Wheelchair Basketball Team from 2004 - 2008 that culminated with the team winning the gold medal at the Paralympic Games in Beijing, China. Also, John realized more rewards as assistant coach for the USA Men's National Wheelchair Basketball team from 2012-2016 and 2016-2021 with both teams winning gold at the Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro (2016) and Tokyo (2021).

John enjoys his work with HOPE Network and striving to assure its continual growth. He loves spending time with the pediatric (Juniors Sports) program and offering sports instruction, as well as, life skills lessons to the many children. His favorite recreational activities include water skiing, golf, and warm weather vacations.

John and his wife, Susan Garrett-Sikora, a retired physical therapist at the Western Pennsylvania School for Blind Children, have been married 42 years and reside in Freeport, PA.

**CURRICULUM VITAE
(Abbreviated Version)**

John M. Sikora

Title: Executive Director

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Pittsburgh, PA 15238
(412) 780-4605
sikora@zoominternet.net

Home Address: 800 Sunset Drive
Freeport, PA 16229

Marital Status: Married - wife, Susan

EDUCATION

1972 - 76 University of Pittsburgh; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
BS, Psychology

APPOINTMENTS AND PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS

2013 - 2021 Assistant Coach
USA Men's National Wheelchair Basketball Team

2005 - 2008 Assistant Coach
USA Women's Wheelchair Basketball National Team

2004 - 2018 Advisory Board, KidSports Magazine
Pittsburgh Sports Report, Inc.

2003 - 2007 Chairperson, Nominating Committee
National Wheelchair Basketball Association

2000 - 2006 Member, President's Council, Allegheny Valley YMCA

1997 - present Executive Director
H.O.P.E. Network

1996 - 1999 Director, Spinal Cord Program
HEALTHSOUTH Harmarville Rehabilitation Hospital

1991 - 1997 Director, Healthsports Program
Harmarville Rehabilitation Center

1997 - 2001 Member, Board of Directors
Nick Buoniconti Fund for the Miami Project

1996 - 2005 Member, Advisory Board School of Physical Therapy
Duquesne University

1994 - 2001 USA Basketball - Men's Committee

1993 - 2001, Assistant Men's Basketball Coach
2010 Freeport Area High School

1992 - 2005 Commissioner of the Keystone Conference
National Wheelchair Basketball Association

1991 - 2010 Director, Harmarville Hoops Classic

1981 - 1990 Manager, Spinal Cord Program
Harmarville Rehabilitation Center

1988 - 1992 President - Keystone Conference
National Wheelchair Basketball Association
1984 - 1992 Board of Directors
Allegheny Independence House
1977 - 2004 Chairman - Board of Directors
Pittsburgh Steelwheelers, Inc.
1976 - 1981 Social Worker I
Harmarville Rehabilitation Center

MEMBERSHIPS

1997 – present Western PA Basketball Coaches Association
1993 Who's Who in Business and Industry, 28th Edition
1989 - present Keystone Paralyzed Veterans of America - life member
1986 - 1987 32nd National Wheelchair Games Planning Committee
1985, 1988 National Wheelchair Games Planning Committee
1984 - present Paralyzed Veterans of America
1983 - 1992 American Spinal Injury Association (ASIA)
1982 - 1990 Spinal Cord Society
1981 - 1991 American Paraplegia Association
1980 - 2001 National Spinal Cord Injury Association
1980 - 1982 Rehabilitation Engineering Society of North America (RESNA)
1977 - present National Wheelchair Basketball Association
1977 - present Pittsburgh Steelwheelers, Inc.

AWARDS/HONORS

September 2016 Gold Medalist – Assistant Coach – US Men’s National Wheelchair Basketball
Team Paralympic Games; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
January 2015 Pittsburgh Basketball Club Hall of Fame - Inductee
September 2008 Gold Medalist - Assistant Coach - US Women's National Wheelchair Basketball
Team Paralympic Games; Beijing, China
June 2007 Allegheny-Kiski Valley Sports Hall of Fame - Inductee
November 2006 John H. Harris Award
Variety, The Children’s Charity
April 2004 Bill Duncan “Good Guy” Award
National Wheelchair Basketball Association
April 2003 National Italian American Sports Hall of Fame
Second Wind Award
October 2002 University of Pittsburgh
Varsity Letter Club – Awardee of Distinction
October 2001 UCP Community Hero Award
April 2000 Armstrong County Sports Hall of Fame - Inductee
October 1999 Elizabeth Forward High School Alumni and Friends Association
Hall of Fame - Inductee
May 1995 USA Basketball Paralympic Trials invitee
April 1993 Member - USA National Wheelchair Basketball Team
World Cup Qualifiers; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

September 1990 Member/Co-Captain - USA National Wheelchair Basketball Team
Pan Am Games; Caracas, Venezuela

July 1990 Member - USA National Wheelchair Basketball Team
World Championships; Aylesbury, England

December 1989 Pittsburgh Most Valuable Person presented at the 14th Annual
Willie Stargell Pittsburgh MVP Awards Banquets

July 1989 Member - USA National Wheelchair Basketball Team
World Championships; Aylesbury, England

June 1987 Outstanding Achievement Award presented by Federation of
Independent School Alumnae

April 1983 Inductee - City of Pittsburgh - Sports by Ability Hall of Fame

RESEARCH

- 1988 - 1989 Clinical Center for Application of Neuromuscular Stimulation in SCI,
Harmarville Rehabilitation Center and Illinois Institute of Technology
- 1987 - 1991 Robotic Vocational Workstation, Harmarville Rehabilitation Center and
Carnegie-Mellon University
- 1987 - 1991 Effect of REGYS I Computerized Functional Electrical Stimulation on
Cholesterol Level SCI Individuals, Harmarville Rehabilitation Center
- 1984 - 1986 Clinical Applications of Functional Electrical Stimulation, Harmarville
Rehabilitation Center
- 1982 - 1983 High Density Lipoprotein Cholesterol Studies, Harmarville Rehabilitation Center
and University of Pittsburgh

PUBLICATIONS AND ARTICLES

ABSTRACTS

- 1989 Sikora J, Brenes G, McDermott A: The Effect of Computerized Functional
Electrical Stimulation on Lipoprotein Cholesterol in SCI. Paraplegia, May 1989
- 1987 McDermott A, Brenes G, Sikora J: Variations in Return of Motor Control
Following Functional Electrical Stimulation in Spinal Cord Injured Patients.
Paraplegia, February 1987
- 1986 McDermott A, Sikora J: Functional Electrical Stimulation to Facilitate the
Return of Voluntary Muscle Strength After Spinal Cord Injury.
Physical Therapy, May 1986
- 1983 Brenes G, Nicholas J, LaPorte R, Dearwater S, Sikora J, Robertson R: Disability,
High Density Lipoprotein Cholesterol Subfractions and Risk of Heart Attack.
Archives of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Vol. 64, No. 10, October 1983
- 1983 Equipment, Supply and Cost Chart for Complete Spinal Cord Injury Patients

MEDIA PRODUCTIONS AND APPEARANCES

- August 2001 Mister Rogers Celebrates the Arts #1765
- April 1999 Mister Rogers - Let's Talk About It: Extraordinary Friends (Book)
- October 1995 Fox T.V., World of Boating
- November 1994 Mister Rogers Neighborhood, "Fast and Slow" - #1685
- September 1994 ESPN - Outside the Lines
- March 1994 Mister Rogers Neighborhood, "Wheelchair Basketball" - #1677
- Numerous other newspaper, magazine, radio and television appearances.*