

USOC joins the Citizenship through Sports Alliance

Leaders - including Richard M. Schultz of the US Olympic Committee - from high school to college to professional sports organizations, created a group called the Citizenship through Sports Alliance to promote positive values among students through athletics.

The nine groups participating in the coalition are the USOC, National Basketball Association (David Stern), National Football League (Neil Austrian), National Hockey League (Gary Bettman), Major League Baseball (Leonard Coleman), National Collegiate Athletic Association (Cedric Dempsey), National Federation of State High School Associations (Robert Kanaby),

National Junior College Athletic Association (Mary Ellen Leicht) and National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (William R. Patterson).

All of the organizations have pledged staff time and resources to promote a culture of sportsmanship, work ethics, teamwork and respect. The alliance will be launching a programme entitled Focus on Respect with a common logo and public service announcements.

Rather than start from scratch, the alliance plans to use existing programmes that already reach youth, in order to coordinate its outreach effort. US Olympic Committee programmes include Champions In Life, Olympic school curriculum, Commu-

nity Olympic Development programmes, Youth Sports Leadership Academy, Newspapers in Education programme, media training, code of conduct, national anti-doping campaign, coaching standards and education, FLAME programme, Project Gold workshops, Olympic MEDALS programme, the Jack Kelly Fair Play award and the USOC Visitor Center school outreach programme.

"We will try to target virtually everything out there: violence in sports, drug abuse, respect and attitudes that individuals have", Schultz said. "We will be trying to develop positive role models that can have an impact on younger kids. We need the athletes, the players

associations, the coaches and the coaches associations to be involved", he added. "We need the media, sponsors and marketing people. The more people we can get involved in this effort, the bigger the impact and the better chance we have of being successful." The Alliance's mission statement is to promote the values of citizenship that are realized through sportsmanship and ethical play in athletic competition. Further, this initiative seeks to generate a sport culture that fosters the values necessary to teach and learn self-respect and respect for others.

"This is a marathon, not a sprint", Schultz said. "We see it as a unique opportunity to work together and have a dynamic impact on society."