

JOHN W. AKKANEN GYMNASIUM

John Akkanen is a 1970 graduate of Brimley High School. Coach Akkanen coached various levels of Brimley basketball in both the boys and girls programs for three decades. Of those, eighteen years were spent as the boys varsity coach, including seven years where he simultaneously coached the varsity girls team. He retired from coaching in 2001, having compiled a combined varsity record of 369-226. Following the 1989-90 season, the boys varsity team was named the U.P. Team of the Year, with Coach Akkanen being further honored as the U.P. Coach of the Year. In recognition of his coaching achievements and his dedication to the Brimley Athletics program, Coach Akkanen was elected to the Brimley Athletic Hall of Fame. He has also been a nominee for the U.P. Hall of Fame.

Coach Akkanen brought class to Brimley basketball. He always insisted on doing things the right way and doing it better than anyone else. He was a father figure to many he coached and still holds a special spot in their hearts even today. After retiring from coaching, he has continued to stay active in the entirety of Brimley Athletics – driving sports busses, running clock, and announcing.

Coach John Akkanen has left a legacy in the hearts and minds of those he coached during his three decades (1979-2001). Brimley Area Schools is forever grateful for the tremendous amount of time and effort Coach Akkanen has put into our athletes, our athletic programs, and our school. We are honored to recognize his contributions in the naming of this gymnasium – the John W. Akkanen Gymnasium.

Biography

Boys coaching career

Jr. High 1979-1981

J.V. 1981-1983

Varsity 1983-2001

Compiled a varsity record of 261-152

District Championships: 9 (1989, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 99, 2000)

Regional Championships: 4 (1990, 91, 94, 95)

EUP Conference Championships: 8 (1987, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95)

Girls coaching career

Jr. High 1993

J.V. 1994-1999

Varsity 1985-1992

Compiled a varsity record of 108-74

District Championships: 5 (1986, 87, 88, 91, 92)

Regional Championships: 1 (1986)

EUP Conference Championships: 1 (1987)

