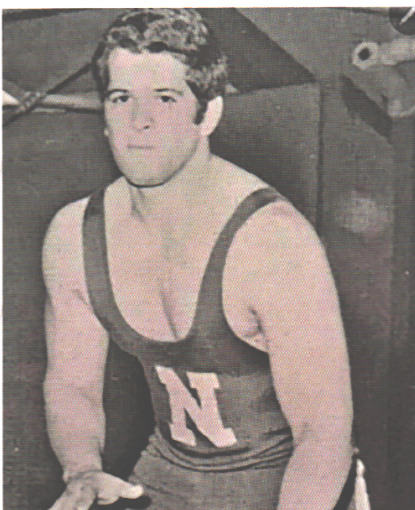




# Francis "Frank" Ciavattone Jr.

Despite a long list of accomplishments, 2023 Medal of Courage honoree Francis "Frank" Ciavattone Jr. is best known for his kindness, character and generosity. Frank is a living example of what it means to overcome insurmountable obstacles, providing support and inspiration to others along the way. Frank credits his athletic and professional success to the foundation he built during his outstanding wrestling career at Norwood High School.

Coming from a family of manual laborers, Frank was built like a brick house and put his strength to use in life and athletics. Frank's athletic journey began when he joined the wrestling team in junior high. That year, the high school coach gave ninth graders the opportunity to wrestle at the high school level; Frank was the only ninth grader who joined. Ultimately, he became the first wrestler in school history to wrestle for four seasons. Frank's year-round strength training made him the ideal upperweight, while his charisma made him an irreplaceable teammate. Frank was known by his teammates for treating everyone as the most important person in the room; he would wrestle, train, lift, and work with absolutely anyone, regardless of their skill level or capabilities. This leadership and comradery continued every off-season when Frank transformed his family's barn into a weightlifting gym for all to enjoy. Carl Puzin, a former teammate, recalled "Not only did Frank provide a place for athletes to go, but he also provided heat, electricity and plenty of Olympic steel. He helped any athlete desiring strength skills. Everyone was welcome at his home gym, and it was open 24/7 year round. If it ever snowed, there was always a path shoveled from the road to the gym; that's how Frank was and still is."



Frank entered his senior season as a massive, pinning machine with a 54 inch chest and arms like tree trunks. He won the prestigious Lowell Holiday Tournament, then steamrolled his way to becoming the Southeast Sectional Heavyweight Champion. Frank entered the 1973 Massachusetts State Tournament as the #2 seed at heavyweight with a season record of 21-0, 20 of those wins being by pin, and finished third. The top six heavyweights on the podium that night undoubtedly stand as the most outstanding group of heavyweight placewinners in Massachusetts State Tournament history. That group now includes three