

JOHN PURNELL

John Purnell is President and CEO of the Henson Company, parent company of Brute Wrestling, the leading wrestling equipment and uniform manufacturer/distributor in the United States.

A former varsity wrestler at West Chester State College, John joined Henson in 1975, after two years as a teacher and soccer and wrestling coach. After joining Henson, John helped the company founder, Capt. Josiah Henson, develop and market the complete Brute wrestling product line, including the first ever multi-color wrestling shoe line. John has also directed the development of a long-term contract with the world sporting goods leader, adidas, through which Brute is the exclusive distributor of adidas wrestling products for all of the Americas. Through this association with Brute, the adidas product line has experienced meteoric growth with Brute being the largest customer to the adidas Olympic Sports Business Unit.

Support of amateur wrestling at all levels has always been a cornerstone of the Henson Company and Brute Wrestling operations. For his personal contributions to the sport through these corporate activities, John Purnell has received several honors. In 2002, he was named Wrestling USA's Pennsylvania Man of the Year, and in 1997, he was inducted into the NCAA Division III Wrestling Hall of Fame. Most recently he was named the Grand Marshall for the 2005 Virginia Duals, one of the largest and most prestigious wrestling events in the nation.

John's commitment to youth has been exemplified in his efforts to assist the AAU clubs in under privileged areas. His leadership in aiding the AAU wrestling committee to develop marketing strategies and new events has been invaluable. John Purnell is more than a business partner; he is a friend of all in AAU wrestling.