



NEWS RELEASE

Irving Independent School District
Office of Communications
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Irving ISD Athletic Hall of Fame Names Class of 2023

The Irving ISD Athletic Hall of Fame Committee is pleased to announce the Class of 2023, which includes a storied girls' basketball coach, college football National Champion, Hall of Fame wrestling coach and former professional football player. The inductees are:

- Suzie Oelschlegel
- Chris Hall
- Terry Knouse
- Rodrick Walker

The 2023 Hall of Fame inductees will be honored at a banquet on Saturday, May 20, at 6 PM at the DFW Airport Marriott (8440 Freeport Pkwy, 75063). Tickets are \$30. For sponsorship and/or ticket information, please contact the Irving ISD Athletic Department at 972.600.5215.

Since its inception in 2012, the Irving ISD Hall of Fame is designed to honor those who have contributed to athletic excellence throughout the history of Irving ISD. Read more about this year's honorees below.

Suzie Oelschlegel

Suzie Oelschlegel served Irving ISD for 42 years as a teacher and coach, collecting numerous honors including 885 career victories, a state championship, national coach of the year honors and top 100 coach by the University Interscholastic League (UIL).

Coach O, as she is fondly known by her players and colleagues, began her career in 1980 at the district's Crockett Middle School, where she served for a year before transferring to MacArthur High School as an assistant girls' basketball coach. She helped lead the first MacArthur girls' basketball team to the state tournament in 1986. That fall, she was named the school's head girls' basketball coach.

During her tenure as head coach, Coach O led the Lady Cardinals to numerous district, area and regional championships resulting in multiple state playoff runs. In 2011, she led the Lady Cardinals to a state championship and was named National Coach of the Year for girls' basketball. In addition, her team was invited to participate in the prestigious Nike Tournament of Champions in Phoenix that year. She snagged her 800th career win in the fall of 2018 and ended her career with a total 885 career victories, making her one of the winningest coaches in state history. In fact, in 2021 she was recognized by the UIL as a top 100 coach.

As a leader in the realm of girl's athletics, Coach Oelschlegel served on multiple All-Region, All-State and All-Star committees and coached numerous honorable teams and players, including 13 McDonald's All-Americans and three professional WNBA players. Numerous players furthered their career playing collegiate basketball, many at the Division I level, with one of her players starting for an undefeated National Championship team. Most notably, 90 percent of her graduating senior athletes received college scholarships.

Coach O received countless accolades throughout her career including numerous District and Area Coach of the Year awards; Region 6 Coach of the Year by the Women's Basketball Coaches Association; head coach of several All-Star games, including the WMCA Navy All-American team; 2009-2010 Dean Weese Class 5A Outstanding Coach of the Year in Texas; UIL Lifetime Achievement Award in 2011; and Who's Who Among America's Teachers Association.

In addition to the athletic awards, Coach O garnered several city and state government awards. Former Irving Mayor Beth Van Duyne presented Coach O with the key to the city and named a day in honor of the Lady Cardinals. Former Speaker of the House Linda Harper-Brown honored the team with a resolution recognizing their state championship and her long and accomplished coaching career. In addition, Dallas County Commissioner Elba Garcia and Judge Clay Jenkins proclaimed Lady Cardinal Day for the city of Dallas in recognition of the team's state title.

Coach O retired from Irving ISD in May 2022 after 42 years of service. Even in retirement, Coach O continues collecting awards. In February 2023, the main gymnasium at MacArthur High School, where she coached for 41 years, was renamed the Suzie Oelschlegel Gymnasium in her honor. Now, she is a member of the Class of 2023 Irving ISD Athletic Hall of Fame.

Chris Hall

Chris Hall left his mark on Irving High School and Irving ISD as a versatile football player. A three-year letterman, Hall was named to Dave Campbell's Super Team in 2004, and the All-Area team that same year. He was also a two-time All-District and All-City honoree in 2003 and 2004. During his football tenure, he amassed a 10-4 record and helped lead his team to the Division II 5A quarterfinals in 2003.

"Chris Hall had tremendous talents, great work habits and studies the game to get better every year," says his former coach, Jim Bennett. "All of this being said, the most important thing about Chris Hall was how he affected our team. Chris had great leadership skills, and the other kids looked up to him. Chris was not necessarily an outspoken leader but a leader by example in practice, in games and in the building at Irving High."

After high school, Hall took his talents to the University of Texas at Austin on a scholarship, where he won a national championship in 2006. As a four-year letterman and three-year starter, he played in 45 games, starting in 37 of them. In 2007, he started at least one game at all five positions on the offensive line.

In 2009, Hall was a finalist for the Rimington Trophy, which is awarded to the player considered to be the best center in college football. He earned first team American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) All-American honors in 2009; was a two-time All-Big 12 2nd team selection in 2008 and 2009; and was named to the AP All-American 3rd team in 2009. He was also a four-time Academic All-Big 12 team selection from 2006 to 2009.

In addition to the national championship, he also won Big 12 Conference Championships in 2005 and 2009, Fiesta Bowl Championship in 2009, Holiday Bowl Championship in 2007 and Alamo Bowl Championship in 2006.

Terry Knouse

Throughout his two decades of service to MacArthur High School and Irving ISD, Terry Knouse coached more than 50 individual state champions. The accomplished wrestling coach also won seven team state championships and had a top 5 team in the state 19 out of the 20 years of his career. He also coached two World Team qualifiers and numerous others who went on to wrestle in some of the top college programs in America.

“I watched Coach Knouse take kids from the hallways of MacArthur and turn them into state champions,” says Dan Sanderlin, a former athlete. “We had a saying when I was there - we don’t rebuild, we reload. Keep in mind that Coach Knouse did not have a feeder program. Coach Knouse did this by recruiting kids within the school with no wrestling experience. Every tournament that we went to, every dual that we competed in, we were viewed as the dynasty of high school wrestling in Texas.”

Knouse was inducted into the United States Wrestling Hall of Fame and was a member of the inaugural Texas Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Rodrick Walker

As a standout athlete, Rodrick Walker shined at Nimitz High School before taking his talents to the collegiate level at the University of Texas at Austin and eventually the NFL.

Walker was an outstanding athlete at Nimitz from 1986 to 1990, collecting numerous accolades including selection as preseason All-American All-State, All-District, All-Area, District All Star, All-Metro, All-City; Sophomore of the Year; District Offensive MVP; state leading rusher and the No. 2 junior recruit in the nation. His teams also won bi-district and area championships and were a regional finalist. Walker was the leading rusher in the state in 1988.

“He was one of the best backs in the nation his junior year,” says his former coach, Wes Pyfer. “He broke his leg on the first carry of his senior year and did not play another down that year. He was still selected to play in the Texas High School Coaches All-Star Game at the Astrodome in July and went on to have a great career at the University of Texas at Austin.”

In college, Walker won two Southwest Conference Championships and was his team’s leading rusher. He was named to the Southwest Conference and NCAA Commissioner’s Honor Rolls and was a recipient of the Academic Presidential Endowment Scholarship. He also earned Doak Walker Award mentions.

Walker was a 1995 free agent with the Houston Oilers and was named the UT Earl Campbell Athletic Alumnus of the Year in 2022.

He currently serves as President of the Austin and San Antonio chapters of the NFL Players Association and Director of Player Relations for the Austin chapter of the NFL Alumni Association. He also hosts 4th and Goal Athletic Camps for youth. His

foundation, the Rodrick Walker Foundation, supports battered and abused women and children, the Boys and Girls Club, Dell Children's Hospital, Toys for Tots and the Central Texas Food Bank.

Walker has a son, Rodrick Walker II, and a daughter, Madelyn Marie Walker.

The Irving ISD Athletic Hall of Fame also includes:

The 2022 Class:

- Jim Hart, Irving Athlete
- Les Lancaster, Nimitz Athlete
- Don Reeves, Travis/MacArthur Coach

The 2020/2021 Class:

- Bruce Burns, Community Contributor
- Tom Ladusau, MacArthur Athlete and Nimitz Coach
- Tyson-Thompson: EI, Irving Athlete
- Norman Watkins, Irving Athlete

The 2019 Class:

- Tony Arnold, Irving Athlete
- Joe Barnett, Coach
- Stan Cason, Stadium Announcer
- Glenn Sullivan, Irving Athlete

The 2018 Class:

- Ken Dabbs, Coach
- Barry Knott, Nimitz Athlete and Irving Coach
- Don Poe, Coach
- Mike Sartor, Coach

The 2017 Class:

- Brad Knouse, MacArthur Athlete
- Hobart Lytal, Coach
- Duane Miller, Irving Athlete
- Thomas Uhr, Coach

The 2016 Class:

- DeMarcus Faggins, Irving Athlete
- Kelvin Korver, Irving Athlete
- Ray Overton, Coach
- Morris Sloan, Coach and Irving Athlete

The 2015 Class:

- Jim Bennett, Coach
- Mike Phillips, MacArthur Athlete
- Bill Rutherford, Irving Athlete
- Kenny Walters, Irving Athlete

The 2014 Class:

- Brandel Chamblee, MacArthur Athlete
- Ruthie Lobb Davis, Irving Athlete
- Aaron De La Torre, Irving Athlete
- Margie Stipes, Community Contributor
- Randy Waldrum, MacArthur Athlete
- Murphy Webster, Coach

The 2013 Class:

- Michael Huff, Nimitz Athlete
- Kerry Cooks, Nimitz Athlete
- Joe Perryman, Coach
- Anne Uhr, Coach
- Joy and Ralph Ellis, Community Contributors

The 2012 Class:

- Akin Ayodele, MacArthur Athlete
- Cedric Colby, MacArthur Athlete
- Alan Lowry, Irving Athlete
- David Rose, Irving Athlete
- Deeanna Williams, Nimitz Athlete
- Mike Farda, Coach
- Bob Harrell, Coach and Athletic Director
- Dick Lear, Community Contributor